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# THE OLD NORSE ELEMENT IN SWEDISH ROMANTICISM

BY

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CALVIN THOMAS.

NEW YORK, October, 1914



**TO**  
**MY MOTHER**  
**WHOSE SACRIFICE AND ENCOURAGEMENT**  
**HAS MADE MY EDUCATION POSSIBLE**



## PREFACE

Enthusiasm for the Norse saga during the Swedish Romantic period was not confined to the members of the so-called Gothic School. The interest in the Viking age spread also to other groups of poets as well as to some individuals who, like Stagnelius, were not identified with any school. As we shall see, however, they were all, in the ordinary, broad sense, Romantic. This review, therefore, purports to deal with a number of heterogeneous writers, often belonging to entirely different literary confessions, but all bound together, for us, by a bond of common interest in Scandinavian antiquity.

The purpose of this study is fourfold: (1) to show clearly that a genuine interest in Scandinavian antiquity was present from the beginning in both the new literary tendencies of the time, (2) to characterize this interest, (3) to collect and examine all the important literary monuments from 1810 to about 1825 that make use of Scandinavian saga, and (4) to record conservative opposition to Norse mythology in Sweden during that period.

The well-known literary chiefs, Tegnér, Geijer, and Ling, will be treated only incidentally in this study, in connection with specific problems. The present investigation intends to emphasize the work of the minor "Goths" and of such other Romanticists as are not ordinarily mentioned in connection with the Old Norse element. Among the latter are the Fosforists.

An appendix has been added, containing brief biographical data of the most important writers connected with Swedish Romanticism.

Lastly, I wish to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed in any way to make this investigation possible.

To Professor Calvin Thomas, first of all, I owe a deep debt for substantial encouragement and for ever-ready assistance, especially in connection with the final proof-reading.



To Professor Robert Herndon Fife, Jr., of Wesleyan University, who introduced me to the study of Romanticism; to the late Professor Rudolf Tombo, Jr., to Professor Louis Auguste Loiseaux, and especially to Professor Arthur F. J. Remy, I owe more than a pupil's debt to a teacher.

To George Frederick Hummel, A.M., of Brooklyn, N. Y., I am indebted for a valuable suggestion in connection with the Introduction; Professor Fletcher Briggs of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts has furnished a useful hint; Fröken Elna Bengtson of Borås, Sweden, has provided a list of books for my bibliography; and Andrew Thomas Weaver, A.M., of Northwestern Academy, Hannah Senior Nicholson, B.A., and Marion E. Morton, B.A., recently of the Hanover (New Hampshire) High School, have assisted in correcting the manuscript.

I beg to acknowledge also my indebtedness to the Yale University library, where I obtained many of my most valuable sources.

A. B. B.

July, 1914.

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## INTRODUCTION

### FOSFORISM AND GOTHISM

Den nordiska renässansen har lika djupa rötter som all annan europeisk romantik. Anton Blanck: "Den nordiska renässansen."

The term "Romanticism," in its broadest sense, is as vague in Sweden as elsewhere, and as a literary movement it is impossible to fix its boundary in time or to outline its program with any absolute precision. Nevertheless, beginning about 1810, we can easily detect two main tendencies in Swedish Romanticism; one was called Fosforism, after the literary organ *Fosforos*, and the other we may call Gothism. The former looked to Greek, Spanish, Italian, and more especially to German models, while the so-called Gothic School aimed to have a more exclusively Scandinavian, i. e., "Gothic" character.

Both schools were, in a sense, national; both strove for originality and independence, opposed the correct, Gustavian, Academicians, and looked forward toward a new era in Swedish letters. The Fosforists lauded the work of their Swedish, as well as of their German, progenitors and brought many a hitherto obscure name into greater prominence. Of course the policies of both schools were reactionary; Fosforists and Goths alike were dissatisfied with existing conditions and pined for something new. But what they had in mind turned out to be the old—the medieval or the primitive. As in Germany and England, then, Swedish Romanticism was retrospective; but in Sweden medievalism was merely incidental or second-hand; more often the new pathfinders in Sweden went beyond the Middle Ages and studied early Oriental religion and philosophy; they sought for new interpretations of the ancient classics, or, like the Goths, they limited their attention to the Scandinavian countries and studied Norse mythology.

The principles of Fosforism had been in the making for at least a quarter of a century before they finally burst out into

an open revolution about 1810. The most obvious manifestations of the approaching storm were: an increasing interest in German and English literature, a growing hostility toward French models, and frequent emphasis on feeling, originality, and imagination. The preceding century had been the age of enlightenment in Sweden and the dominating tone had been entirely French. The Academy of Belles-Lettres (Vitterhets-Akademien), which had been founded by Queen Louise Ulrika in 1753, had been reorganized and enlarged in 1786 by Gustavus III., and was modeled after the French Academy. The Swedish capital, therefore, under the dictatorship of the Swedish Academy, continued to mold literature according to French rhetorical systems. In so doing, it undoubtedly performed a noble and necessary mission; it gave Swedish literature both style and form. But with the end of the French Revolution and the death of Gustavus III. in 1792, many patriots began to feel that the French style had prevailed long enough; that it was getting a bit abstract, mechanical, and monotonous, and, therefore, undesirable.

One of the first to break with the French taste and to prepare the way for a new literary movement was Thomas Thorild (1759-1808). He was no creative artist, but an original thinker, who had a keen appreciation of life and art. In his controversy with the Academicians Leopold and Kellgren he gradually disabled the adherents of the Old School and anticipated the New by stirring up enthusiasm for Klopstock and Ossian. As a pupil of Rousseau, Thorild worshipped in him a "Romantic" favorite, who had escaped the fate of the other Frenchmen. Bengt Lidner (1757-1793), an irregular, Byronic type of poet, had already shown his skill in depicting strong passion and unbridled sentimental feeling. With marked ardency of expression and richness of invention he described the half-despairing sufferings of the human soul.<sup>1</sup> Another of the eighteenth century poets, and the greatest of them all, to receive special recognition by the Romantic School was Karl Michael Bellman (1740-1795). He was thoroughly original, popular, and national. His bachanalian poetry showed great genius

<sup>1</sup> Cf. L. Hammar skjöld: "Svenska vitterheten," 2d ed., pp. 402-3.

and depth, and Hammarskjöld believed that this "Swedish Anacreon" had grasped the very essence of the Swedish national life.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, German and English authors were being read more and more, both in the original and in translation. An acquaintance with Gellert, Haller, Hagedorn, Hölty, Bürger, Jean Paul, Goethe or Schiller led to the study of Tieck, Novalis and the brothers Schlegel. "Werther" was translated into Swedish as early as 1786; Klopstock's "Messias," 1789-1792; Ossian, 1789-1794; translations of Young and Sterne had appeared by 1790, and during the next two decades the German philosophers Kant, Fichte, and, more particularly, Schelling, rose rapidly in favor along with the younger group of German Romanticists. Calderon, Ariosto, Petrarch, Tasso, Dante, Rousseau, and Shakespeare receive considerable attention and the otherwise satirical and unfeeling *Clas Livijn* was moved to tears at the reading of "Wilhelm Meister."<sup>2</sup> W. F. Palmblad, one of the charter members of the new school, likewise melted into tears at reading Lafontaine's novels and Kotzebue's dramas.<sup>3</sup>

On October 7, 1807, a number of congenial souls, saturated with enthusiasm for German philosophy and the new German Romanticism, met in Uppsala and formed the society *Musis Amici*. It was really a "new edition" of a similar organization that had existed from 1803-1806 called "Vitterhetens Vänner" or "Friends of Belles Lettres," and its leader was the seventeen-year-old Atterbom, of whom we shall have occasion to speak later. The following year the name of the society was changed to "Auroraförbundet" (a name which explains itself) and, as the members believed, a more definite outline of its program was drawn up. The purpose of the Förbund was:

"in accordance with firm and eternal principles, gathered from Greek and German models, first to ennoble and develop the strength [of the Förbund], then to work energetically against the depraved taste [of the time], and finally, at least with a bright ray in the sky

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Frunck: *Nya skolans förberedelser och första utveckling*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

of Swedish literature, to indicate the path of the approach of the sun."<sup>1</sup>

From now on we have a militant organization of Romantists. With a sincere purpose, but in a somewhat vainglorious style, and often the most unscrupulous polemics, the new group set out to overthrow the old systems and to infuse the new Schelling-Tieck-Novalis spirit into Swedish letters.

Beginning with 1810, for about a decade, there raged a feud between the literary conservatives and radicals, of such intensity and recklessness that it probably outstripped its German model in this respect. The Academicians, led by P. A. Wallmark, voiced their sentiments in the *Journal för Litteraturen och Teatern* (after 1813 called *Allmänna Journalen*) and the principal organs of the Auroraförbund were, in the order of their first appearance: *Polyfem* (from Polyphemus, the one-eyed giant who looks straight ahead); *Fosforos* (originally spelled "Phosphoros"); *Poetisk Kalender*; and *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning*. Much has been written on this interesting controversy. Suffice it to say here that, in aspiration, the radicals, now called Fosforists, were generally right; that both sides expended a wealth of energy and exhibited great wit in their polemics, but were often bitter and unjust in their method. Naturally the battle was most violent at the beginning, as in *Polyfem*; *Fosforos* adopted a less aggressive policy and aimed to show in original poems and reviews what *Polyfem* did in polemics. The chief characteristic of the *Polyfem* policy was a satirical, merciless attack on everything French and on everybody of French sympathies. Hence, the old, rationalistic school, the Swedish Academy, and its protégé, "the dry Boileau" Leopold, were criticized beyond all reason. No little talent was displayed in this struggle, however, and everyone will find that, for the most part, the polemics of the Fosforists are far more fascinating than their poems.<sup>2</sup>

Toward the end of the feud Tegnér, the sponsor of clearness,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf Hjärne, in "Götiska förbundet," page 230, calls attention to the temporary confusion in the literary camp, brought about by the "blind self-confidence" of the Fosforists, and adds that their poetry "hovered between heaven and earth without belonging to either."

attacked the vagueness of the Romantic theories, so that after 1820 the Fosforistic School had practically ceased to exist as a militant institution. But its ideas lived on in its efficient leader Atterbom, who, during the following decade, was destined to produce the work *par excellence* of this phase of Swedish Romanticism, namely, "The Isle of Bliss" (Lycksalighetens Ö). This poem was a long but splendid treatment, in dramatic form, of a Celtic fairy-tale; it was not free from satirical references to contemporary conditions in art and society, but it teemed with beautiful lyric passages and contained the philosophical ideas of the movement. But what had the Fosforists as a body really accomplished, and what had been the character of their creative achievements?

In spite of strenuous opposition the Fosforists had returned from the battlefield with a victory for Swedish culture. And it was natural that they should; they had nothing to lose and everything to gain. By their zealous encouragement of German literature and philosophy a wholesome spirit, more akin to the Scandinavian temperament, had been infused. Some members of the Old School, to be sure, had known the German classics before the Romantic School was born; but, barring a few translations, they seem to have kept their knowledge mostly to themselves. The Fosforists, on the other hand, stirred up things by publicly proclaiming the value of the new gospel. Fosforism, like many aspects of Romanticism in Germany, stood for a deeper meaning and spirituality in life and letters; it stood for the irrational, for the eternal and infinite, for the identity of nature and spirit, for the divinity of art and poetry, for mystical longing, for freedom and religiosity. Sweden is indebted to Fosforism for a profound, healthy, quickening impulse to both her literature and her literary criticism, and for inaugurating the serious study of esthetics.

The failings of the Fosforists were numerous and serious, and an impartial critic must often deal, therefore, with theoretical aspirations rather than with actual, positive accomplishments. No original masterpiece was produced within Fosforistic circles until several years after the polemic storm had passed away; that is, not until Fosforism, in its more restricted



sense, had disappeared. Here and there, indeed, a lyrical gem made its appearance. Hedborn had a gift for the picturesque and wrote some choice hymns, the consumptive Per Elgström was an excellent colorist, and his poems revealed an elegiac, melancholy, or mystic style; but these were not great poets. Neither did Hammarskjöld, the law-giving Friedrich Schlegel of Swedish Romanticism, exhibit any marked creative ability. He was too busy mapping out programs, ridiculing French taste, and attacking Alexandrines to do anything really original, and Palmblad's literary contributions were mostly reviews and translations. Atterbom, the life-long leader and the greatest of the Fosforists, was the most prolific writer, but his poetry was often obscure and his best work, mentioned above, did not appear until he was a middle-aged man. We see, then, that Fosforistic activity was largely polemic and negative in its character; beyond this it was imitative, critical, and metaphysical.

To what extent the Fosforists, and other poets who actively sympathized with them, were influenced by German Romanticism, may best be seen by calling attention to a few additional features of the Swedish movement. The Schlegels, Tieck, Novalis, and the classical German authors are lauded to the skies and quoted as authorities at every opportunity. The atmosphere is full of *Stimmungspoesie* with constant reference to the invisible or infinite. *Oändlighet* (*Unendlichkeit*) is the prevailing keynote in the Romantic poetry of Sweden. As in Germany, much of it was unintelligible, and this is particularly noticeable in the earliest poems of Atterbom, as in some strophes of the Prolog to *Fosforos*. Moonlight, twilight, darkness, and night appealed also to the Uppsala youngsters, and rich coloring was a common phenomenon. Johan David Valerius (1776-1852) was criticized for moralizing his drinking songs, showing a tendency toward the "Lucinde" system of morality; and here and there we discover a strong poetic sympathy for the Holy Virgin and Catholicism. Spanish and Italian authors were studied and translated, and this led to experimentation in all kinds of Southern verse-forms. The terza-rima and canzone were introduced in the spirit of opposition to Alexandrines, and sonnets were written by the score.

The November number of *Fosforos* for 1810 opens with twenty sonnets by Atterbom.

In their hostility to French forms, the Fosforists often went to the other extreme, and they have been severely criticized for being literary slaves of Germany. There proved to be no ultimate danger in this relation, however, for, in the first place, the Fosforists did not succeed in fulfilling all their most radical promises. Then, too, there are differences between the German parent and its Swedish offspring showing a certain independence, and that some of the foreign Romantic seed had fallen by the wayside, so far as absolute imitation was concerned. Original productions among the younger Swedish Romanticists were almost exclusively lyrical, not only in content but also in form. "Wilhelm Meister" was hailed with joy in Sweden as well as in Germany, but it produced no imitation of its genre in Sweden. Sweden had no formless *Romanpoesie* in the narrow sense of the term; though Swedish poetry teemed with apotheoses of its own art, we find no enthusiast like Ofterdingen and no peripatetic and almost fanatic "knight of the moon" like Franz Sternbald. In some of these respects, it seems to me, Swedish Romanticism became more sober and sensible than that of Germany, though it may have been due to a lack of genius that this type of the novel was not developed. As already observed, Swedish Romanticists were not theoretically opposed to a freer morality, but practically they led as regular lives as other people and had no such domestic troubles as some of their German masters. Elgström died young through no fault of his own, but Atterbom and Hedborn lived long and happy lives in wedlock. None of the Fosforists joined the Catholic Church, though Hammarskjöld and Atterbom were both much impressed by it.

Interest in Scandinavian antiquity formed only one part of the pretentious Fosforistic program and, as this review is intended to show, this was often subjective and allegorical. The Goths, however, confined themselves to this one part and aimed to make it objective, a fresh and living phenomenon in Swedish culture. It will be in order, therefore, to describe briefly the history and characteristics of the Gothic School.

The Gothic School (Götiska Förbundet) was founded in the beginning of the year 1811. The members of this brotherhood met and adopted a constitution on February 16. "A morally patriotic thought," or spirit, was to be the kernel of the Society, and paragraph 3 of the statutes provided that every Brother should consider himself "absolutely in duty bound to investigate the sagas and chronicles of the old Goths," meaning by the "Goths," the old Norse ancestors; hence the name of the movement.<sup>1</sup> Its leader was the chancery-clerk Jakob Adlerbeth, trained in love for his fatherland from early youth. Men of any profession, possessing some striking "Gothic" qualification, were eligible to membership, though authors and artists were especially desired. Eventually new members were elected to the number of one hundred. As in the case of the Fosforists, the enthusiasm was greatest at the start; the year 1811 is both the beginning and the culmination of the general interest in the society. Sixteen meetings were held the first year, thirteen the second, but after 1825 no more than five meetings were ever held in any one year. But the activity continued with considerable force for about a dozen years after the founding of the Förbund, and during this time ten volumes of its literary organ, *Iduna*, appeared. After the formal dissolution of the society in 1844 there appeared an eleventh and last number in 1845.

The "Gothomania," as it was sometimes called at first, was characterized, like Fosforism, by one-sidedness and exaggeration. Scandinavian antiquity was to be resuscitated, not only in art and poetry, but, to a certain extent, in life; not only was Icelandic literature to be studied, but, whenever possible, the viking customs were to be revived. Naturally the Goths took the initiative at their regular meetings. Each Gothic Brother first adopted the name of some heathen forefather, and was supposed, within three months after his election to membership, to give a discourse on his ancestral namesake to the members of the society. This pagan name was used in address, both at the meetings and in private correspondence among the members. Thus Tegnér became Bodvar Bjarke; J. P. Lefrén,

<sup>1</sup> See Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, pp. 11 and 15.

Guttorm; D. Nordin, Sigfried; P. H. Ling, Bosi; Adlerbeth, Rolf; J. H. Wallman, Helge; and Geijer, Einar Tambaskjälver. Tremendous enthusiasm, not to say boisterousness, prevailed at all gatherings, and the character, courage, manliness of the original inhabitants of Sweden were constantly emphasized. The members drank mead, both out of individual horns and out of a common vessel called "Bragebägaren" (the Brage-cup) and saluted each other in appropriate heroic terms. Sometimes the meetings were held out of doors; then stones were carried together and placed in a circle to represent a primitive Norse Thing or court. At the reading of poems with national or patriotic themes, or upon hearing the results of investigations in the Swedish past, the Brothers gave unbounded applause. At times they waxed sentimental; it is said that Geijer in reading Tegnér's "Nore" had to stop for tears.<sup>1</sup>

The literary leaders of the Gothic movement were Tegnér, Ling, and Geijer. The first two took an active part in the management of the society, but after a time Ling resigned his membership for reasons which will be discussed later. But in his research work Ling continued to be the very personification of an exaggerated Gothism, and his poems continued to receive applause in Gothic circles. Strangely enough, Ling contributed but one article to *Iduna*. This was published in 1814, and the subject was "Gymnastics." In the interim this periodical had already contained some of the best poems ever composed in the Swedish language. Geijer, the real chief in 1811, published "The Viking" (Vikingen), "The Last Skald" (Den siste skalden), and "The Last Combatant" (Den siste kämpen), in the first number, and later, at the beginning of the third decade, when fragments of "Frithiof's Saga" appeared, they were published in the *Iduna*. The fourth great Goth was A. A. Afzelius (1785-1871), a clergyman and author of the popular "The Reel of the Water-Sprite" (Näckens polska). He eventually translated the Elder Edda but did his best work in Swedish folklore. Together with Geijer he published, in 1814-16, a large collection of Swedish folksongs ("Svenska folkvisor") in three volumes.

<sup>1</sup> See Hjärne: Götiska förbundet, p. 21.

The Gothic movement in Sweden was merely one way of expressing the spirit of independence and nationality that arose all over Europe, as a protest against rationalism, cosmopolitanism, and Napoleonic oppression. After 1806 the Swedes were involved in the continental wars, through their German possessions. Then came the loss of Finland and the Swedish revolution of 1809. No wonder, then, that national disasters should help prepare the soil for patriotic utterances of any sort. Now, as Hjärne<sup>1</sup> rightly contends, the best method to reawaken a national self-consciousness is to revive the memory of what has produced a great people in the past. The Gothic School, therefore, was enthusiastically welcomed, especially by the young, even if some old and prejudiced conservatives looked with fear and suspicion on the re-introduction of a pagan system of mythology. The Goths did a tremendous amount of good by stimulating interest in the Scandinavian saga-age in general, and Swedish antiquity in particular. Every true patriot wanted to know something about the Asa-doctrines, the Eddas, and the life of the viking ancestors. Runes were deciphered and heathen relics collected. Though unsuccessful in his attempt, the consistent, militant manager of the society, Adlerbeth, tried to have a learned Icelander imported to give instruction in Old Norse. Manuscript treasures were opened up and gradually the vehemence of youth gave way to a calm, scientific spirit of investigation. For instance, Afzelius published in the third volume of *Iduna*, both text and translation of "Völuspá" from the Elder Edda, after they had both been inspected by the Danish philologist Rask. Snorre Sturleson's "Heimskringla" was published by men outside of the society and was probably influenced by it.<sup>2</sup>

We have seen that in the case of the Fosforists the main foreign influence was German; with the Gothic School it was Danish. Anton Blanck, in his excellent dissertation on "The Northern Renaissance" (see bibliography), has shown the increasing popularity of Northern themes in French, English, German, and Danish literature during the eighteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> Götiska förbundet, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 38-9.

Indirectly, all these foreign tendencies converge toward the Gothic movement in Sweden, but directly, and mostly through the literary work of Oehlenschläger during the first decade of the nineteenth century, outside influence came from Denmark. We shall return to this topic in connection with the chapter on art.

In Denmark the new German Romanticism and the national movement were fused in one person, Oehlenschläger, with the balance of power decidedly in favor of the national element. In Sweden these two tendencies, to be sure, were centered in two literary factions, but their propagandists often combined forces, and at times we find, as in Denmark, both Gothic and Fosforistic ideas in the same poet. The Goth, Ling, was a Romanticist in spite of himself; Geijer, after the first patriotic ecstasy had subsided, was more of a Fosforist than a Goth; Afzelius contributed to both *Fosforos* and *Poetisk Kalender*, and, in turn, Atterbom and Hammarskjöld contributed to *Iduna*. Nicander, an active member of the Gothic School, had a genuine Romantic longing for the South, and hostile critics when they attacked one movement generally attacked the other. Often the two worked sympathetically side by side, or they felt at liberty to make friendly encroachments upon each other's territory. Both were prompted by ardent search for "det ursprungliga."

The work of the Swedish Romanticists in the field of Scandinavian antiquity was not one of discovery; it was a revival movement. It was an enthusiastic attempt to crush any spirit of indifference that prevailed toward the culture of the pre-Christian ages in Scandinavia, and to rekindle a spirit of pride in the past. What the Romanticists sought, was to arouse a more general and permanent popularity in Old Norse themes among their countrymen and to make a more thorough study of the original sources. An interest in Norse mythology and history had existed, however, in various parts of Europe, for nearly a century and a half before the "Goths" took up the subject. To be sure, it was spasmodic, the conceptions now and then were based on misunderstanding, and the conclusions were often speculative in the extreme; but the evidence of a

Gothic inclination was there, and it will repay us to review briefly this evidence before we proceed to the revival in Sweden during the Romantic period.<sup>1</sup>

During the decade 1750-1760, when so many Romantic tendencies began to assert themselves in Europe, we begin to detect an interest in Norse antiquity. In fact, northern barbarian literature by virtue of its wildness and power becomes one of the most effective weapons in the struggle against classicism.<sup>2</sup> Paul-Henri Mallet, a Swiss, gave the impulse for the study of the Scandinavian<sup>3</sup> past when he published in 1755 his "Introduction a l'histoire de Danemarck." In addition, Mallet made several translations from the Eddas and showed a love for the Old Norse religion. He made the mistake, however, of regarding the Scandinavian as a branch of the Celtic family.

In England, Percy's interest in Old Norse was due to Mallet's book, which was translated by Percy in 1770. In the meantime Percy had published in London (1763) "Five Pieces of Runic Poetry," translated from the Icelandic. "The Bard" (1754-1757), by Gray, had likewise a Norse as well as a Celtic element. Gray himself states that he borrowed from the Norse<sup>4</sup> and he made two translations,—“The Fatal Sisters” and “The Descent of Odin.” The Ossianic poems teem with viking elements, and Blanck asserts that Macpherson obtained “the apparatus” for his Celtic epic from Gray and Mason.<sup>5</sup> Frank Sayers (1763-1817) published in 1790 “Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology,” containing three minor dramatic efforts, all localized on Celtic or Northern territory.<sup>6</sup> A translation from a Latin version of the poetic Edda by Amos Cottles appeared in Bristol in 1797.<sup>7</sup> William Herbert,

<sup>1</sup> A part of this introduction is based on Anton Blanck's "Den nordiska renässansen," Uppsala, 1911, and is, in a sense, a review of the most important data of this work. Blanck's investigation covers 433 pages, plus an extensive bibliography. I am much indebted to Blanck for that part of the history which precedes the year 1810. His results and references have, of course, been verified whenever possible.

<sup>2</sup> See Blanck, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> "Scandinavia" throughout this study is to be taken in the old, broad sense, naturally, including Denmark and Iceland.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Blanck, p. 84.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 121ff.

who had mastered the Scandinavian languages and could use the Icelandic sources, was the first Englishman to take advantage of this knowledge, and published in 1804-1806, in his "Miscellaneous Poetry," some selections entitled "Select Icelandic Poetry." According to Lockhart, Scott studied Scandinavian mythology and wrote essays and read papers on the subject as early as 1792; but all thus far, with the exception of Herbert, had followed in Gray's footsteps and used only secondary sources.

Fr. David Gräter (see below), in his "Nordische Blumen," refers on page xi to a free English translation of "Lodbrockar-Qvida" by the Reverend James Johnstone, A.M., published in 1782. Blanck does not mention Johnstone at all, but from an article in the "Dictionary of National Biography," Vol. XXX, p. 78, by Thompson Cooper, we obtain the following information:

James Johnstone (d. 1798), a "Scandinavian antiquary, was a Master of Arts, though of what university is not stated, and a clergyman of the established church. For several years he was chaplain to the English envoy extraordinary in Denmark." He was afterwards rector in Ireland. From 1780-1786 he published in Copenhagen, London, or Edinburgh, six different works on Scandinavian, Celtic, and Celto-Norman literature and antiquity, consisting both of originals and translations. The translation to which Gräter refers contained also "a literal Latin version, and an Icelando-Latino Glossary and Notes." Johnstone's first work, which appeared in 1780 in Copenhagen, bore the title "Anecdotes of Olave the Black, King of Man, and the Hebridian Princes of the Somerled Family. To which are added Eighteen Eulogies on Haco, King of Norway; by Snorre Sturleson, poet to the monarch; now first published in the original Icelandic; from the Flateyan and other Manuscripts; with a literal version and Notes." I have not seen these editions myself.

Independent of any impulse from England there arose a northern renaissance in Germany, where Gottfried Schütze (1719-1784) became an important pioneer mediator between the old school and the new. He was a pupil of Joh. Georg



Keyssler, the author of "*Antiquitates selectae septentrionales et celtae*" (1720), was a well-read scholar, and published in German a popular exposition of Norse mythology. Schütze made no distinction between the Celts and the Germans; even the old Norsemen, according to him, had both druids and bards, and this mistake was no doubt responsible for much of the later confusion in this field. Schütze's real importance was as teacher of Gerstenberg, whose "*Gedicht eines Skalden*" (1766) marks the beginning of a new literary genre in Germany. Blanck devotes several pages to a discussion of Gerstenberg's work.

German interest in the North is closely connected with the worship of Ossian, and this is well illustrated in Gerstenberg's pupil, Klopstock. His "*Hermannschlacht*" (1769) is a mixture of the antique, Ossian, and the North. But Klopstock had no sense for the historic or the characteristic and his Norse divinities are, for the most part, mere names.<sup>1</sup> Michael Denis translated some Icelandic poems, such as "*Völuspá*" and "*Vegtamskvida*." The so-called "Bards," such as Karl Friedrich Kretschmann,<sup>2</sup> and the "Gottinger Hain" worked along the same lines as Klopstock, but with both groups of poets the Ossianic element predominates. This is likewise the case with Herder<sup>3</sup> who, in "*Von deutscher Art und Kunst*" (1773), published "*Über Ossian und die Lieder alter Völker*." But in Herder's famous cosmopolitan collection of folksongs, "*Stimmen der Völker*," as it was called in the second edition of 1785, we find some of distinctly Norse origin, and indeed some from Greenland. It was Herder who in Strassburg called Goethe's attention to the Eddaic poems and gave him a copy of Resenius's Edda.<sup>4</sup> Herder distinguished himself from his predecessors by using more scientific material and adopting an historical

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161ff.

<sup>3</sup> For Herder see *ibid.*, pp. 164-179.

<sup>4</sup> See "*Dichtung und Wahrheit*," Weimar edition, Vol. 28, p. 143. In the same passage we learn that Goethe was much interested in saga material, and that he was already acquainted with Mallet. The Edda mentioned was an edition by the Dane Per Resenius (1625-88) of Copenhagen. It contained the original of the Snorre Edda together with a Latin and Danish translation by two other scholars. Resenius published in 1683 a *Lexicon islandicum* by the Iclander Gudmundus Andreæ (d. 1654). Cf. article on Resenius by Weiss in *Bibliographie Universelle*, Nouvelle edition, Vol. 35.

method of study. He exhibited much independence of thought even if, as Blanck believes,<sup>1</sup> Mallet was his main reliance.

Herder's originality of thought becomes of special interest when we compare his views on Norse mythology with those of the cautious and classic Scandinavian critics at the beginning of the Romantic period. In "Iduna oder der Apfel der Verjüngung," published in 1796 in *Die Horen*, Herder states the objections to the coarse and grotesque in the new mythology, but sees several motives worthy of artistic treatment. The Northern characteristics, he finds, are deeds and strength of soul. But the Norse gods should not have greater prominence than other poetic systems. Greek mythology was not to lose its incontestable rank, but Herder pleads for a recognition of the Norse system proportional to its importance. The raw and barbarian element must be sacrificed. This same idea is embodied in "Zutritt der nordischen Mythologie zur neueren Dichtkunst" (*Adrastea* X 1803). It will be essential to remember Herder's views when we discuss the new mythology and art.

Friedrich David Gräter (1768-1830)<sup>2</sup> was something more than a dilettant in Norse subjects and did some work of real scientific importance. He acquired a good philological training; he studied Danish and Old Norse and his "Nordische Blumen" of 1789 contained translations from the 1787 edition of the Edda published by the Arne-Magnussen Foundation. Although the character of the original is rather sparsely preserved the translations show very conscientious work. In 1791-1812 appeared his organ *Bragur, Ein literarisches Magazin der deutschen und nordischen Vorzeit*, in eight numbers, but it contained little of value for the North. This was followed by *Idunna und Hermode* (1812-16), which contained, as did *Bragur*, reviews, translations, and minor articles.<sup>3</sup> Kose-

<sup>1</sup> Blanck, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 179ff.

<sup>3</sup> According to Herder, Gräter's "Northern Flowers" were received with an "almost unreasonable" frigidity. Cf. "Zutritt der nordischen Mythologie zur neueren Dichtkunst" in "Sämmtliche Werke" (Suphan edition), Vol. 24, pp. 312-313. In a footnote on page 312, Herder refers, among others, to a Karl von Münchhausen, who had distinguished himself in the new mythology.

garten (1758-1818), in his "Gedichte" (1788), published a part of Ragnar Lodbrok's death-song, and Fouqué's "Sigurd der Schlangentöchter," the first part of a trilogy "Der Held des Nordens," appeared in 1808. In the meantime the Edda-translation of the brothers Grimm was being advertised and the period of German dilettantism in Norse mythology was over.<sup>1</sup>

The North does not play a very large rôle in French literature of the eighteenth century. In fact, up to 1800, when Madame de Stael's "De la littérature" appeared, the "cold and distant north" remained in a hazy gloom and the interest in it was merely one of curiosity.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the influence of Mallet's work is noticeable in France also. In the didactic novel "L'Arcadie" by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Norse mythology is introduced, but the work was of little consequence. Comte de Tressan, in 1782, published an Icelandic novel: "Histoire de Rigda et de Regner Lodbrög, Roi de Danemarck," being the fourth part of "Corps d'extraits de romans de chevalerie." Madame de Stael was really the first to give the French an idea of the Norse spirit, and her main authority was Mallet. But she believed religiously in the genuineness of Ossian and held that Ossianic and Icelandic literature greatly resembled each other. Hence there came about a nebulousness of conception similar to, if not worse than, the initial conception in Germany. Among the *dii minores* that followed in this field "Norse" and "Ossianic" must have been taken often as synonymous terms.<sup>3</sup>

It may seem strange that the impulse to revivify the Old

<sup>1</sup> In the Harvard University library there is a volume on the Edda with the following title: "Abhandlung abgefasst in einem Schreiben an einen Gelehrten von der alten Isländischen Edda." It was published in Halle and Leipzig, and the date, written in lead pencil, is 1774. The name of the author, likewise written with lead pencil, is given as Jakob Schimmelmann. I have been unable to find any reference to such a student of Icelandic literature. Blanck does not mention him. The work deals with questions of the genuineness of the Eddas and manuscripts in Uppsala and Copenhagen. It also raises the query whether the German edition promised from Stettin may be expected soon. It is of special interest, since it contains sketches of Thor, Odin, and Frigga.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Blanck, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to Blanck, the subject of the North in French literature has been investigated by Gunnar Castrén in "Norden i den franska litteraturen," Hälsingfors, 1910.

Norse element in Denmark should have come from a foreigner; but such seems to have been the case, for it was the sojourn of Klopstock in Copenhagen that became the immediate incentive for the Norse poetry of Johannes Ewald (1743-1781). In a way, as Blanck points out,<sup>1</sup> this was but a loan, for the Dane, O. F. Müller, had previously furnished the hint for Gerstenberg's "Gedicht eines Skalden" and Klopstock was a pupil of Gerstenberg. But the fact remains that the effective influence at the time came from Germany, and "Rolf Krage" (1769) by Ewald exhibits unmistakable similarities to Klopstock's productions. The Celtic influence is very marked; Ossian plays a large sentimental rôle and the whole is unhistorical. Whereas Oehlenschläger three decades later used Danish, Norwegian, and Icelandic subjects, Ewald limits himself to Danish, using Saxo as his main source. His knowledge of Norse antiquity was very superficial; he confused myth and saga and like his model made no clear differentiation between the Celtic and the Norse. The same nebulous northern tone reigns in "Balder's Death" (Balder's Død), 1773. Blanck has also detected an influence of Shakespeare on Ewald.

After the death of Ewald, Denmark produced no great poet until we come to Oehlenschläger. Between these two was a reactionary, classical period of didacticism and satire, and during the decade beginning 1780 the rationalistic tendency, under the leadership of the Norwegian Society,<sup>2</sup> gained the ascendancy. Some interest in Norse literature still prevailed, however, though the method of treatment as well as the general attitude toward the saga had become different. P. F. Suhm (1728-1798), a contemporary of Ewald, and famous for his exhaustive work in the early history of Denmark,<sup>3</sup> created the novelette with northern theme, but his style is entirely unromantic with hardly any trace of Ossian.<sup>4</sup> Pram, inspired by

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Blanck, pp. 136ff, and p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> So called because its chief, Johan Herman Wessel (b. 1742), was a Norwegian.

<sup>3</sup> His history of Denmark contains fourteen volumes, though it extends only to the year 1400.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 220. With respect to Suhm's work, Dr. Horn says: "The most remarkable are his Norse tales, which made a certain sensation, not only because they were new, but also on account of their sentimental style,

Wieland, published (1785) "Staerkodder, et digt i femten sange," which was the most important creation in the Norse field during the rationalistic period.<sup>1</sup> Even satire pounced upon northern subjects and Jens Baggesen's famous "The Origin of Poetry" (Poesiens oprindelse) is a mythological parody based on Wieland's "Komische Erzählungen." Blanck points out that Baggesen's picture of Gunlöde influenced all successors, and especially Ling in Sweden.<sup>2</sup> O. J. Samsøe (1759-1796) wrote three novelettes with Norse themes, of which the first, "Frithiof," written in the decade beginning 1780, was based on the Icelandic Frithiof-saga.

It will be remembered that the Danes did much work during the last quarter of the century in Old Scandinavian history and philology. And this is but natural; Icelanders had to come to Copenhagen to study, a fact which in itself was an incentive to keep up ancient traditions. Manuscripts were deciphered with great zeal and profit, and the Arne-Magnussen Foundation furnished financial support. The latter published its renowned editio princeps of the Edda in 1787, Shøning's edition of the "Heimskringla" had appeared in 1777, Rasmus Nyerup's "Review of the most Ancient Poetry and Literature of the North" (Udsigt over nordens aeldste poesi og des litteratur), 1791, the "Snorre Edda," by Nyerup and Rask, 1808, not to mention the influential literary work of Oehlenschläger, which begins along with the new century. We shall have occasion to return to Oehlenschläger later.

Swedish interest in the saga element can be traced back to the seventeenth century; a century which, in many respects, was the golden age of Sweden. During the beginning of the Stjernhjelm period (1640-1740), Stjernhjelm (1598-1672) himself had attempted Icelandic as a basis for a prose style but was not very successful.<sup>3</sup> The significant fact, however, was which was anything but genuine Norse, but they happened to satisfy the taste of that period." ("History of the Literature of the Scandinavian North," p. 203.)

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schück: in Introduction to "Svensk national-litteratur" (Sv. N. L.), Vol. VI, p. 5.

the actual discovery of the Icelandic literature about this time, and as common property of the North it was called "Gothic" (Götisk). Schück writes:

"A multitude of Icelandic sagas, mostly from the period of decline in Icelandic literature, were then translated into Swedish, although only a small number were printed, and one needs only to read the catalogs of several of the libraries of the nobility to find how immensely popular these Icelandic sagas were at the close of the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the eighteenth."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, Schück goes so far as to say that inasmuch as most of the novel literature during this period circulated in manuscript form, and time for making copies was inexpensive in the country, one might claim without exaggeration that the Icelandic saga was the novel of the Swedish Carolingian age.<sup>2</sup> But the popularity of the saga, at least among investigators, was pseudo-historical rather than literary or critical, and the "Golden Age" produced no literary expression of its sympathies for the Norse element. We may assert that, both among ordinary readers and among the more educated classes, this sympathy was prompted by an indefinite and patriotic feeling of curiosity for an unknown, fabulous antiquity. This feeling, as is well known, had been aroused during the last quarter of the seventeenth century by a group of men, antiquarian in their intentions, and of whom the most important was the fantastic polyhistor Olof Rudbeck the Elder (1630-1702), in whose *Atlantica* (1675-1702)<sup>3</sup> fabulous historiography was carried to its climax. The spirit of Rudbeckianism that followed reigned up to about 1760,<sup>4</sup> i. e., for almost a century. This spirit of "Rudbeckianism," or unbounded patriotism and faith in Sweden as the cradle of all civilization, must be understood if we are to comprehend a second form of it during the Swedish Romantic period. The foremost Romanticist, Atterbom, a "Fosforist" and not a formal "Goth," had great admiration

<sup>1</sup> H. Schück: "Den götiska skolan" in "Ur gamla papper." Sjette serien, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> Rudbeck's specialty was medicine and at twenty-two he discovered the system of lymphatic vessels. Bartholin, a Danish scholar, claimed the same honor at about the same time.

<sup>4</sup> Blanck, p. 316.

for Rudbeck's efforts and devotes 244 pages of his "Biographies and Lectures"<sup>1</sup> to an appreciation of Rudbeck's unscientific but fascinating investigations.<sup>2</sup>

But there was a well-marked Norse tendency before Rudbeck. A royal decree of November 23, 1666, provided for the preservation of antiquities, including saga material and viking songs ("Kämpa-och historie-visor").<sup>3</sup> Among the pioneers in this line was Verelius (1618-1682), who published the

<sup>1</sup> P. D. A. Atterbom: "Minnesteckningar och tal." Förra bandet: "Minne af Olof Rudbeck den äldre." Örebro, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> For the benefit of readers who may not be acquainted with Rudbeck's "Atlantica," a brief word of elucidation, based on Atterbom's characterization, may be in order. First, as to the name. While engaged in historical investigation Rudbeck discovered a similarity in names between those in Plato's mythical "Atlantis," the seat of his ideal republic, and those of certain localities in Sweden (cf. Horn, History of the Literature of the Scand. North, p. 340). Immediately Rudbeck conceived the idea that Paradise had been located in Sweden and (undoubtedly influenced by an earlier Johannes Magnus, who tried to make similar deductions) that Noah's grandson Magog had founded the Magogian, i. e., Gothic kingdom in Sweden and from there the whole world had been populated. In other words, all culture came from Sweden and was then transmitted to the Greeks by the Phenicians. The whole work teemed with ingenious etymologies and there is said to be a remarkable coincidence in names between Rudbeck's sources and the Norse terms. Rudbeck tries to identify classic and Norse myths by the linguistic method. He even attempts to connect the Swedish word "Necken" (a musical, male water-sprite) with "Noach" (Noah), both being lords of the water. But even if his imaginations ran wild at times, Rudbeck's effort was a most serious one, and his work shows some desultory knowledge about the Edda, Norse mythology and history, and about Icelandic scholars, such as Sámund Frode and Brynjolf Svenson. The work was too gigantic and was never finished; it appeared in four immense parts, of which the last is a fragment. Part I alone had 891 pages with tables and drawings. As it was, the enthusiastic author was unable to carry his history farther than to Abraham. Rudbeck's "Atlantica," naturally, created a tremendous excitement all over Europe. Many believed in it, others doubted, and again others regarded it as colossal foolishness, while the more credulous and super-patriotic Swedes felt proud and delighted. But indirectly, the "Atlantica" had an historical value, for it prompted further research, and Atterbom (Lefnadsteckningar och tal. Förra bandet, p. 71) gives Rudbeck credit for inaugurating a new epoch in the investigation of antiquity. Through the suggestion of Rudbeck many Icelandic sagas were printed between 1673-1700, some at his own expense (ibid., p. 171). For the details of this interesting work I refer to Atterbom's review. I believe Atterbom to have many qualities in common with Rudbeck; a matter which we shall take up in the first chapter.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Atterbom: Minnesteckningar och tal., pp. 83ff.

"Hervarar Saga" in 1672, and it was from him that Rudbeck received the impulse for his work. Atterbom believed Verelius to be "a most thorough interpreter of the runes and the newly discovered Icelandic literature."<sup>1</sup> Johan Perinskjöld (1654-1720) published the *editio princeps* of Snorre's "Heimskringla," and Johan Hadorph collected rune-stone material. Rudbeck's attempt to prove that classic mythology was nothing but a distorted Swedish system served to heighten the national feeling, even if the fundamental facts in the attempt were spurious. As a consequence, a super-heated patriotism lived on, and with it an interest in Norse literature. J. H. Mörk (1714-1763), a Rudbeckian, and Sweden's first novelist, wrote, in 1742-1745, "Adalrik and Göthilda," an original novel with an heroic national motive from Northern antiquity. Björner's "Tales of Combat" (*Kämpadater*) had appeared in 1737, and Göranson published Snorre's Edda in 1746 and *Völuspá* in 1750. As Schück points out, Mörk's novel, Verelius's "Hervarar Saga," and Björner's "Tales of Combat" were read with pleasure in the country districts as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century, and both Tegnér and Atterbom got their first impressions from them. "Here was a channel, then, which connected Rudbeck's time with that of Geijer."<sup>2</sup> After 1750 the rise of a critical school, led by such men as Dalin, was rapidly putting an end to speculation and a decade later Rudbeckianism had practically disappeared.

Now, for a number of years, there was no fruitful experimentation with saga elements. Then comes Olof Rudbeck, (1750-1777), the great-grandson of Rudbeck the Elder, who, "during his last days," devoted himself to "the zealous study of Old Norse literature."<sup>3</sup> Uno von Troil, Archbishop of Uppsala (d. 1803), had won a reputation in a series of letters (Uppsala, 1777) about Iceland which were later translated

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> "Den götiska skolan," pp. 218-19. On page 219, also, Schück recalls the movement in Germany that was parallel to Rudbeckianism in Sweden, namely, the fanatic *Schwärmerei* for German antiquity aroused by Tacitus's "Germania." Then Lohenstein, the Edda and Ossian, all served to intensify this enthusiasm and, finally, all were united in the poetry of Klopstock.

<sup>3</sup> L. Hammarskjöld: *Svenska vitterheten*, 2d edition, p. 292.



into both German and French.<sup>1</sup> Finally, a temporary impulse for a resuscitation of "Gothic" material came directly after 1777, when Ossian was translated into Swedish. The influence of Ossian<sup>2</sup> and Rousseau were to be prominent characteristics of the Gothic tendency thereafter.

G. G. Adlerbeth (1751-1818), the father of the leader of the Gothic School, translated Eyvindr Skaldaspiller's "Hakonarmál" in 1783, which was printed in *Stockholms-Posten* in 1790. Adlerbeth detects an intimate relationship between the Ossianic and the Icelandic songs of combat, and in the northern literature he sees the "strong and bold natural features" of primitive man.<sup>3</sup> The first serious effort to employ Norse myths in modern Swedish poetry was in Clewberg-Edelcrantz's "Ode to the Swedish people" (Ode till svenska folket; Stockholm, 1786). Clewberg was influenced by Gray,<sup>4</sup> but it is not known with certainty what his sources were. He was but poorly acquainted with Norse mythology, for he confuses Odin and Thor.<sup>5</sup> Johan Gabriel Oxenstjerna (1750-1818), in his "The Harvests" (Skördarne),<sup>6</sup> glorifies, in true Rousseau style, the "Scythians" (Skyterna) as the first inhabitants of Sweden and as founders of Swedish agriculture. Both Oxenstjerna and Adlerbeth tried to depict the prototype of the Swedish farmer. The imagination of Thomas Thorild (1759-1808), a disciple of Ossian, must have been influenced by Rudbeck's "patriarchal conception of the farmers."<sup>7</sup> To this glorification of the primitive agriculturist the Swedish poets were incited by the Norwegian Society,<sup>8</sup> which had introduced the farmer-type into Norwegian popular poetry. And with less difficulty than in Sweden: for the free Norwegian tiller of the soil en-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hermes, Leipzig, 1823, Nr. XVII, p. 242 (Kritisch-historische Uebersicht des Zustandes der schwedischen Literatur seit dem Anfange dieses Jahrhunderts, by Hammarskjöld.)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Blanck, p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 329.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 331.

<sup>6</sup> For an outline of the history of this Alexandrine poem, see Blanck, p. 341ff. The first version was written in Vienna in 1772-3, though not printed until 1796.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 410.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. above, note 2, p. 17.

joyed a greater prestige, comparatively; he came nearer the embodiment of the Rousseau ideal, and the exaltation of him gained favor more rapidly than in a country governed by the nobility.<sup>1</sup> The Rousseau spirit is very striking in an important and interesting article entitled "The Golden Age of Sweden during the Reign of the Lodbrok Dynasty in the Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Centuries," which appeared in Vol. 4 of "Publications of the Society for the Popularization of General Knowledge" (1794-1798).<sup>2</sup> Here three pagan centuries are represented as an enviable, paradisiac age, with the detrimental results of civilization lacking.<sup>3</sup> There was no poverty, no class distinction, not too many officials, and all the rudiments of a true religion, though heathen, were present. The fact that such a laudatory exposition of the viking period received considerable attention is not surprising.<sup>4</sup>

Even the correct Gustavians employed the Norse saga element in a superficial way. The king himself did not meddle seriously with Norse themes, but representations of Swedish antiquity were to be included in the national repertoire of the theater. But all such representations proved utterly devoid of historical truth or local color, and the King's "erotic bagatel" "Frigga" (1783) is nothing but the imitation of a classic where the name of Jupiter has been changed to Odin.<sup>5</sup> Several dramatists of the king's coterie adopted Norse themes, but with the same result.<sup>6</sup> The most important one of these was Gustaf af Leopold's tragedy "Oden,"<sup>7</sup> which made its *début* at the Royal Theater in 1790. There is nothing historical in it except the pretended journey of the Asa-tribe from the Black Sea to Scandinavia, at the time of Pompey. The scene

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 416 and 418ff.

<sup>2</sup> Swedish name of periodical: *Skrifter af sällskapet för allmänne medborgerlige kunskaper*, and that of the article: "Sveriges lyckliga tidhvarf under Lodbrokiske konungaättens regering uti 9: de, 10: de, och 11: te århundraden."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. Ljunggren: *Svenska vitterhetens häfder*, Del III, pp. 394-5.

<sup>4</sup> Blanck states very significantly that the Gothic School in Sweden was the most complete expression "of this national Rousseauism," p. 428.

<sup>5</sup> Blanck, p. 351.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 355.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Appendix: Notes on Leopold.

is laid in Asia and Pompey himself is introduced into the drama. "Oden" was written according to the French style in Alexandrines, and so, in spite of its name, it gained but little sympathy from the Romanticists. The last of the Gustavian efforts in this line was Adlerbeth's "Ingiall Illråda" (1799); and it was not much of an improvement over its literary patterns in the same genre, but it did have a tendency toward local color.

For the sake of a certain completeness there remains to be mentioned, in this connection, a few names of miscellaneous character. Thorild, to whom we referred a moment ago, should be remembered as a precursor of the "Goths" through his work on local folksongs (1805-1806).<sup>1</sup> Hammarskjöld mentions a Matthias Bjugg, who was "nourished by love for Norse antiquity."<sup>2</sup> At the close of the century A. E. Afzelius urged the use of Norse mythology in modern poetry, and ventured to compare the classic myths and the new.<sup>3</sup> He praised Dalin, Fru Nordenflycht, Gyllenborg,<sup>4</sup> and Leopold for experiments along this line. Peter Tham and Magnus Adlerstam were two dilettants in the investigation of the saga. The former was really a pupil of the remote Rudbeck with no definite remarkable work to his credit, but a man who acquired a name by his originality and enthusiasm for Swedish antiquity. Tham was finally elected to membership in the Gothic Förbund.<sup>5</sup> Jakob Fredrik Neikter, in 1785 librarian and professor of literature at the University of Uppsala, published in 1793-1799 a very romantic-sounding Latin treatise, "*De gente antiqua Troll*," in six parts, showing a scientific interest in the primitive man himself. The "Trolls" were supposed to be the oldest inhabitants of Scandinavia, who had been forced to recede to the innermost parts of the forests by the

<sup>1</sup> "Götamannasånger eller dalvisor." They were published in Geijer's edition of folksongs, 1819. See p. 404 and note 2 on same page.

<sup>2</sup> Svenska vitterheten, 2d ed., p. 420.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Blanck, pp. 298ff.

<sup>4</sup> The Norsism of these three had no more intrinsic value than that of Leopold.

<sup>5</sup> Tham had a quarrel later with Ling about the location of the ash-tree Yggdrasil, the Tree of Time in Norse mythology, whose branches extend over the whole world. Tham claimed it was located near Dagsnäs, Tham's home. The quarrel was symbolic of the time.

coming of the *Asas*.<sup>1</sup> Neikter also published a number of geographico-historical treatises (1791-1800), all in Latin, about the early history of Scandinavia and Iceland in general, and about Sweden in particular. Blanck thinks it possible that Geijer learned some of his Icelandic from Neikter.<sup>2</sup> Nils Henrik Sjöborg, professor of history at the University of Lund, did much for the study of Icelandic in the southern part of Sweden. His "Introduction to a Knowledge of the Antiquities of the Fatherland,"<sup>3</sup> a valuable book for its time, appeared in 1797, and his Icelandic grammar in 1804-1806.<sup>4</sup>

It might appear at first from the above compilation that an actual "revival" of the saga element was unnecessary. But at close range it becomes evident that much of the activity thus far had lacked the essentials of permanency. Something had been done in Old Norse philology and history, but much of it was superficial and unscientific, and examples of original "Gothic" poetry with any positive value were extremely rare. After all, the number of connoisseurs and champions of the indigenous, legendary material was small, and, unlike other subjects, the cult of the saga had not attained a place in literature, or among the Swedish people, commensurable with its value. Sjöborg had tried to keep up Norse traditions at Lund, and Neikter at Uppsala, and both must have had some influence on their younger contemporaries, but Blanck declares (in speaking of the condition at Uppsala) that the "knowledge of Icelandic during the first decade of the nineteenth century had almost died out."<sup>5</sup> What had been accomplished before 1810 in Sweden, then, could, at the most, serve only as an introduction for the more intensive and general work of the next generation. It was left for the Romanticists to introduce the local color, life, vitality, and spirit that would give the saga element an undisputed place in Swedish literature.

<sup>1</sup> Blanck, pp. 252-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> "Inledning till kännedom af fäderneslandets antiquiteter."

<sup>4</sup> "Grammaticae islandicae electa." Other publications of Sjöborg were: "Rigsmal" (1801); "Lodbrokar-Qvida" (1802), translated and edited with glosses; "Gautamal lingua antiqua scandinavica" (1811).

<sup>5</sup> Blanck, p. 297.

## CHAPTER I

### THE INTEREST OF THE FOSFORISTS IN SCANDINAVIAN ANTIQUITY

Vår nya skola egde emellertid i sig sjelf ett så starkt nationelt element, att den vid sidan af den romantiska dikten förstod att uppsöka det fält, som för den skandinaviska norden eger en så stor betydelse och för densamma är särskildt utmärkande, nämligen det fornnordiska lifvets verk och anda. Äfven deruti hade den nya skolan ett stort utmärkande drag och, ehuru bestridd dess förtjenst i detta fall är, våga vi dock påstå, att man äfven mycket från det hållet får taga den i betraktande. Börje Norling: "Nya skolan bedömd i literaturhistorien."

The so-called Fosforists have never been given full credit for what they accomplished in anything, and certainly not for what they did in familiarizing their countrymen with Scandinavian antiquity. Since their interest in Norse antiquity, folklore and early Scandinavian literature was only one number on their program, it has been an easy matter for hostile and uninformed critics to cover up this tendency with a savage invective against their hobbies and faults, such as German philosophy, Catholicism, and obscurantism. That any good could come from a Fosforist is a matter of skepticism even to-day in Scandinavia, and in the past literary critics have usually assumed that no beneficial impulses or influences of any kind could ever emanate from such a source. Especially is this true with respect to the Fosforists' interest in "Gothic" material, which has been either ignored, treated superficially, or misrepresented. This is illustrated in Malmström's "Grunddragen af svenska vitterhetens historia" (IV and V), and in the bitter anti-Fosforist Fryxell's "Bidrag till Sveriges litteraturhistoria." The former (V, 24) gives all the credit to the influence of the Gothic School upon Fosforists. "To be sure," says Malmström, "we can discover certain sympathies in the writings of

the [New] School for our northern song and saga before [the existence of the Gothic Society] but only scattered traces." But he did not stop to characterize these traces and took for granted that they were of no consequence. Fryxell goes even further and answers "Atterbom's legitimate claim to some honor for his work in folklore" with ridicule<sup>1</sup> and a charge of unimportance.

Literary historians, also, have imagined an impassable chasm between the Fosforists and the Goths; that their doctrines were irreconcilable, that activity in one of these circles excluded, for the most part, any activity in the other, and that anything of value was accomplished by the Goths only. We know this to be false; if anything, the converse is true. With respect to an interest in national treasures, the Fosforists and Goths were twin brothers, with the birthright in favor of the Fosforist. Against the prevalent misconception in the matter there came a vigorous protest in 1880 from Börje Norling, whose views are summed up in the quotation at the head of this chapter. In the last part of the second chapter of "The New School" (*Nya skolan*), Norling calls attention to the customary exaggeration of differences between the two new tendencies, and points out how these tendencies often dovetailed into one another, and how their standard-bearers contributed gladly to each others' periodicals. Unfortunately, however, Norling devotes only about nine pages to this large topic and his commendable criticism could serve only as an indicator and not as a permanent demonstration of the misconception. A more recent protest against the same injustice has been filed by Henrik Schück in his brief and popular article on "The Gothic School" (*Den götiska skolan*).<sup>2</sup> Schück goes a step further than Norling: he cannot deny the existence of a formally organized Förbund, but questions radically the existence of a Gothic School in any real literary sense. Tegnér, Geijer, and

<sup>1</sup> "Bidrag," p. 78. Atterbom had rather incautiously called himself the savior of "The Harp of the North" (*Nordmansharpan*). This was the name of a collection of folksongs published in 1816 in *Poetisk Kalender* by Atterbom.

<sup>2</sup> *Ur gamla papper*. Stockholm, 1904, pp. 208-220. It will be observed that this article, like that of Norling, is very brief.

Ling do not count in his estimation; they were too great, too independent, and too different from each other to assume joint leadership of any one faction. There were some minor literary men, technically enrolled as "Goths,"<sup>1</sup> but "from a literary viewpoint the (Gothic) Förbund was of no importance, and the majority of the members were illiterate."<sup>2</sup> This is a severe charge which certainly cannot be made against the majority of the Fosforists, who could follow a discussion on "Gothic" topics with some intelligence. And so, Schück goes on to say, "The New Romanticists (meaning primarily the Fosforists) were not opposed at all to the idea of revivifying the Old Norse poetry and saw in *Iduna*, the organ of the Goths, only a companion in arms."<sup>3</sup> It is unhistorical to imagine an antagonism between "New-Romanticism" and enthusiasm for Scandinavian antiquity; the former includes, and is, in a sense, the parent of the latter.

Norling and Schück, we see, have anticipated the justice which must come sooner or later to the ill-reputed Fosforists. What was the extent and nature, then, of the Fosforists' interest in the Old Norse element? First about the leader Atterbom.

From his earliest infancy, saga literature was a favorite reading of Atterbom. "At the early age of six years the boy lay before the fireside with Sturleson, the *Vilkina Saga*, or Pufendorf's *Universalgeschichte* beside him."<sup>4</sup> But what here concerns us most is Atterbom's national tendency as a militant Romanticist as it appears in the literary publications of the new movement. Now, in the very first number of *Fosforos*, there is undeniable evidence of this tendency. In Atterbom's review of Elgström's<sup>5</sup> pamphlet, "A Great, Patriotic Way of Thinking" (*Om ett stort, ett patriotiskt tänkesätt*), which is as much an "esthetic program for the New School as a review of Elgström's pamphlet,"<sup>6</sup> we find a Rousseau-like apotheosis

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. V of this review, about Nicander and Beskow.

<sup>2</sup> "Den götiska skolan," p. 212.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>4</sup> Johan Erik Thomander: "Inträdes-Tal (öfver Atterbom) i svenska akademien." *Svenska akademiens handlingar* ifrån år 1796. No. 29, p. 179.

<sup>5</sup> This minor Fosforist did not live long enough to accomplish much. Cf. Appendix, note on Elgström.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gudmund Frunck: "Bidrag till kännedom om nya skolans förberedelser och första utveckling," p. 71.

of early Swedish literature. It is written in characteristic Atterbomian language—notice the epithet “the nectar of genius”—and bears the stamp of conviction and enthusiasm. He writes:

“We are reminded, namely, of an age when Sweden was still the kingdom of the Swedes (Sviars) and, if no more, we wish at least to revive its old memories. We know that Sweden at that time possessed a literature, not for fun, or as a plaything for full-grown children, not as an agglomeration of contending masses, produced by opportunity and generated by intellectual need; but a real serious literature, fostered by the nectar of genius and preserved by the victories of thorough investigation, an organic example of the ennobling of a powerful nation. . . . Philology flourished, and ancient monuments of our forefathers were brought to light with a religious zeal which the modern fashionable small-mindedness has tried in vain to ridicule.”<sup>1</sup>

This tone is, obviously, not one of hostility toward primitive Sweden. On the contrary, it leads us to expect encouragement from the pioneer investigator of Swedish antiquity.

To Atterbom this meant more often Scandinavian antiquity, for he believed the Edda to be just as much a parent of Swedish literature as of any other Scandinavian poetry. According to Atterbom, the history of Swedish literature does not begin in the middle of the fourteenth century, but with the Eddas, and thorough understanding of the spirit of the Eddas is indispensable to an understanding of early Swedish literature.<sup>2</sup> Atterbom's interest in strictly indigenous material, then, goes hand in hand with his interest in the Scandinavian saga-age and its literary monuments, and was prompted also, no doubt, by the Romantic search for “det ursprungliga.” In his significant comments on Oehlenschläger's works in the November number of *Fosforos*, 1810, the tone is even more explicit. A national Swedish poetry, based on Scandinavian mythology, is advocated:

<sup>1</sup> “*Fosforos*” for 1810, pp. 41ff. This quotation is crystal-clear as compared with some of Atterbom's early prose, but even here we can detect a tendency toward a bombastic, hazy phraseology. Of course, an allowance must be made for translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. “Inledning till svenska siare och skalders,” Chap. 2, “Samlade skrifter i obunden stil.” Fjerde Delen. Örebro, 1864, p. 58. Hammar-skjöld differed with Atterbom on these points.



"We fail to see where it is criminal to restore our fathers' majestic mythology as poetic symbolism. If one should ever consider seriously an individual Scandinavian art of poetry, this would be the only course to take. Whatever this mythology lacks in plasticity, able geniuses, turning their sole attention to these matters, will complete and beautify gradually. Could not those readers who are not acquainted with the demi-sagas of the Edda, be instructed by good manuals dealing with essential phases, and does not sacred popular belief (folktron), at least in certain remote places in the last retreats of Norse *Naturpoesie*, still cling to several such myths? Does not Thor, that monarch of the lightning, still ride and destroy trolls with his bolts? Do not those mounds blaze in the night, where the giants, whose habitations are shown, sleep beneath their swords? Do not the artful dwarfs laugh within their rocks, and do not monstrous forms converse on moonlit winter-nights around ancestral death-cliffs (ättestupor)? And during the beautiful summer evenings, when the evil-minded fairies of the woods do not venture out of their gloomy dwellings, do not the very elves, those little spirits of light, dressed in a silvery web, still dance beneath leafy trees to the ringing notes of the water-sprite, from out of the aspen-grove on the bank of the river? Those Swedish readers in whom such and other sagas do not re-echo from childhood up are unworthy and incapable of enjoying any kind of poetry.<sup>1</sup>

This strong plea for the Old Northern saga, myth, and superstition is followed by a favorable recension of Ling's "Gylfe," a short allegorical poem in Old Norse dress, on the loss of Finland, which had just appeared in Hammarskjöld's *Lyceum*.<sup>2</sup> Here we have a national poem (by an author who later turned out to be the most red-hot radical of the Goths) published in an organ of a Fosforist, Hammarskjöld, and reviewed conjointly by two more, Palmblad and Atterbom, in the organ of the new movement. He hails Ling as the "northern bard," and proceeds enthusiastically as follows:

"That which charms us so irresistibly in this allegory on the fates and hopes of Sweden is something higher than the effeminate and butterfly-like fancy of the ordinary artist. It is Swedish patriotism (nationlighet), or in different words, love of fatherland,

<sup>1</sup> *Fosforos* for 1810, pp. 313-14.

<sup>2</sup> For a review see *ibid.*, pp. 376-7. Cf. Chap. III, p. 103 and note 5.

ardor for freedom, ambition and heroic power. The Scandinavian saga-dress offers willingly its gloomy and colossal splendor to each and every soul who, in rescuing what is most sacred of its character from a tuneless contemporary age, gladly continues to use it [in literary treatments] of his better forefathers, in order to enjoy it among memories and graves." . . .

It will not escape notice that in the last two quotations there is both a general reprimand for all those who do not sympathize with the saga and a definite complaint about a "tuneless contemporary age."

An important trait of *Fosforos* is its sympathetic attitude toward contemporary publications of saga literature in Denmark. The December number for 1810<sup>1</sup> contains an announcement of the publication of the Nial Saga (*Historia Niali et Filiorum*. Kiøbenhavn, 1809) and makes a brief but intelligent comparison of this saga with the works of Snorre Sturleson and Saemund Frode. The annual for 1811<sup>2</sup> announces, again, a "worthy" complement to the Nial Saga in the Egil Saga in Latin translation, published with notes and chronologies by the same famous Arne-Magnussen Foundation. The editor believes the Egil Saga to be a real contribution to the history of Sweden, Denmark, England, and Norway, and the fact that the hero was both "skald" and "berserk" appeals to him particularly. Then we obtain an idea of the customs of the olden time, its art and commerce, its laws and administration of justice. In short, he finds a "remarkable amount of culture" in the Egil Saga, the events of which took place in the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>3</sup> Then, with a sincere effort for philological accuracy and style, the editor goes on to give information about codices and to name forerunners in the field. Lastly, he ventures the hypothesis that the manuscript is from the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, "when Ore Frode, Snorre Sturleson, and Sturle Thurdsen constituted the golden age of Icelandic literature."<sup>4</sup> The beginning of a critical study of

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 380-1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-70.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

the sagas makes its appearance also at this time in *Fosforos*. Concerning the above mentioned monuments, published in Denmark, Carl C. Gjörwell sent a contribution to *Fosforos* dated in Stockholm, January 10, 1811,<sup>1</sup> which consisted of a few biographical and historical data about Egil and Nial. Gjörwell takes a broad and thoughtful view of the sagas; there must be sympathy for them as literature, he believes, and the historical facts must be taken cautiously. Yet we must attach some historical importance to these tales. All Norse sagas are "not merely ballads to amuse simple-minded people."<sup>2</sup>

To come back to Atterbom. The leading Romanticists paid tribute to the saga element in creative poetry as well as in literary criticism. Atterbom writes to Hammarskjöld, January 14, 1811: "I have now read Oehlenschläger's "Digte," first edition, and a few of his romances have strengthened my opinion still more that a national (egen) Scandinavian poetry is possible. Perhaps you will soon see your friend attempt this new path. Later on I should like to write a text-book on mythology like Moritz's, but I shall not be able to devote myself to Icelandic literature diligently for a couple of years to come. More about this may appear in print."<sup>3</sup> The public did not have to wait long for something in print on Norse mythology from Atterbom's pen. In the very Prolog to *Fosforos*, in that strophe which is addressed to his fatherland, Atterbom calls his countrymen "sons of Thor,"<sup>4</sup> and *Fosforos* for 1811 is introduced by "Skaldarmal,"<sup>5</sup> a direct creative

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 157ff.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> Frunck: "Bref rörande den nya skolans historia," IV, p. 217. Oehlenschläger's "Digte" had appeared in 1807. Moritz was Karl Philip Moritz (1757-1793), Professor in Berlin, and author of "Götterlehre." In a letter to Hammarskjöld, dated February 4, 1811, Atterbom again refers to his intended work on Norse Mythology: "I have not yet touched my intended Norse Mythology. I cannot hope for a realization of this plan before I get time to devote a couple of years exclusively to this work." See Frunck: "Bref," IV, p. 229. On the other hand, Palmblad does not believe that Atterbom's Norse Mythology will ever see daylight unless "God deigns to prolong his life by eighty years." Frunck: "Bref," IV, p. 235.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the last two lines of the strophe:

"Och Thor än sina söners berg bestrålar,  
Der skalden dina nya under målar!"

<sup>5</sup> *Fosforos* for 1811, pp. 3-8, followed, pp. 8-14, by explanatory notes.

tribute to Scandinavian mythology. The mere existence of this poem is well known, but the exact nature of its contents or importance is generally ignored. It is a Romantic plea for a national poetry on the basis of indigenous saga-material. It is at once a glorification of poetry and of the saga age which the poet is to bring back, and a pessimistic characterization of the present era. The poet deplores the existing lack of interest in the runes and complains that feeling is silent in "our desolate days." "What will ye do, ye old rune-tones (runoljud) with a people who have no sense of honor, or with a world which has no God?"<sup>1</sup> The poet regrets that the harp which Brage played in days of yore at wedding feasts sounds no more in Northern forests.<sup>2</sup> And so he sings of battle, Valkyr, and Valhalla; of the viking and the skald; of Thor and the giants, of Frigga and Balder; in short, of the age when "beauty embraced strength."<sup>3</sup> Allusions to the weird norns and the bewitching song of the water-sprite (necken) help to complete the picture. There is great enthusiasm for skaldic poets or, to use Atterbom's own term, "bragar," and their art. "The heart was given for the fatherland, and if you but love the dead as we do, you will lure them back with the magic of song."<sup>4</sup> "Skaldarmal" is written in strophes, in tetrameters, interspersed in the second and fourth lines with trimeters, and with the rime-formula: *ababcc*.

"Skaldarmal" is followed immediately by what is more important than the poem itself: namely, by notes on the Norse mythology employed, and these notes, it seems to me, fix pretty definitely Atterbom's temporary position relative to Old Norse literature. The notes betray a knowledge of what had been done before in this line, and reveal a conscientious study of the myths; they are illuminating and, for the most part, correct. And they must have been accepted by the public as unusually trustworthy interpretations, not only then, when everybody was more or less ignorant of the subject, but later, when poets and scholars were better acquainted with Scandi-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

navian mythology. When, in 1815, four years after the Goths had appeared above the horizon, a dictionary of Norse mythology was published in Nyköping, several of Atterbom's notes to "Skaldarmal" in *Fosforos*, even the incorrect ones, were copied word for word in it.<sup>1</sup> It stands to reason, then, that Atterbom acquired some reputation by his genuinely national poem and its accompanying notes; that some<sup>2</sup> influence must have been exerted on his contemporaries, even if he cannot be given credit for inaugurating the Gothic Society or its publication, *Iduna*.<sup>3</sup> That this Fosforist tried to arouse enthusiasm for the saga element, however, before the actual organization of the Gothic Förbund or the appearance of its literary organ, cannot be denied, and the influence at first, if any, went from Fosforist to Goth and not vice versa. To say unconditionally that the impulse for the historical "revival in Swedish culture, was given by the Gothic Förbund"<sup>4</sup> is incorrect.

But, to leave the matter of influence and chronology, let us examine the notes themselves more in detail. Atterbom's remarks are to serve, not only as a guide to his poem but also to indicate, by way of anticipation, the spirit in which a perfected Edda, possessing a symbolism of its own, could be produced for Norse art.<sup>5</sup> Atterbom declares emphatically that the demi-sagas of the Edda are not a positive evil, the product of a stupid imagination.<sup>6</sup> Then he waxes enthusiastic again and

<sup>1</sup> See *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for 18th of May, 1816 (No. 20), p. 313.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. below, first paragraph of Chapter III.

<sup>3</sup> In the recension of the first number of *Iduna*, in *Forforos* 1811, p. 177ff., Atterbom rather proudly assumes credit for having given the impulse for such a publication. (Cf. below, p. 40.) This has given rise to many useless attacks by his enemies. The dispute is pretty well settled, and it would not be very important if it were not. Norling ("Nya skolan," p. 67) has given the most sensible opinion about this matter: "Of course, *Iduna* would have been born without Atterbom's exhortations, but it would be just as wrong to deny this, as to assert that the Fosforists' love for the fatherland received its first right trend from the latter" (*Iduna*). The fact that the January-February number of *Fosforos* for 1811, which contained "Skaldarmal," appeared a little late (see p. 96 of *Fosforos* 1811), makes no appreciable difference of chronology.

<sup>4</sup> Vedel: "Svensk romantik," p. 251.

<sup>5</sup> *Fosforos*, 1811, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

queries whether the "ideal principle of poetry had not appeared with greater force in Sweden (Svithiod) than in Hellas," whether "our ancestors' wisdom and poetic art, bred under the same sky as we and upon the unchangeable foundation of the same North," did not stand closer to us than a foreign Southern art. In fact, Atterbom takes a concrete example, finds that "the wonderful teachings about creation and its final destruction" are, "from a philosophical view-point, most important in the Edda."<sup>1</sup> In other words, not only the Scandinavian patriot, but the philosopher, had better go to early Scandinavian literature for his fundamentals.

Atterbom is a thorough Romanticist all through his notes. At times he seems verbose and misty, as in his interpretation of creation, but, above all, he is philosophical and symbolic, and compares briefly the characters from Norse mythology with those from Greek, Latin and Oriental myths. The influence of Tieck and Novalis is also noticeable. Atterbom describes Freya, the goddess of beauty, as follows: She was "the symbol of love and hope, a composition of infinite music and ardent longing, and, like Aphrodite of the Greeks, she had sprung from the water." Freya was the daughter of Necken, the genius of music, who was said to live in the water, and of Skadi, the symbol of disturbance in the elements. Necken under the name of Ägir (Neptune) and Niord (Eolus) were worshipped as the rulers of water and wind respectively.<sup>2</sup> Idun (Iduna), the goddess of youth, wife of Brage, the god of fine arts, becomes to Atterbom the embodiment of poetry, the symbol of immortality, and corresponds to Hebe of the Greeks.<sup>3</sup> Balder, the god of innocence, piety and light, becomes furthermore a "symbol of virtue in its original form." He is killed by Loke, the personification of the "original evil," and corresponds in some particulars to Apollo.<sup>4</sup> Frey, the god of fertility on earth, becomes to Atterbom the "symbol of enjoyment (Bacchus), who loves man and gives abundance to nature."<sup>5</sup> Thor

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

represents the sun, and is a "symbol of the masculine principle of the Deity, light, or reason, which fertilizes the nature-element (Naturgrund) or the original imagination, unites (as in marriage) the form and content and thereby becomes the origin of the real creation."<sup>1</sup> He is the god in human form, the mediator between man and God, the redeemer among our forefathers and corresponds to Vishnu and Christ. He occupies the highest throne in Uppsala temple and has assumed greater prominence than Odin, for he (Thor) is visible. Similarly, Frigga or Disa represents the moon and is a symbol of the feminine principle of the Deity, materia. She is the wife of Allfather, Odin, and represents the Fate which is united to Providence, the motherly in the universe, and necessity in nature. She corresponds to the Egyptian Isis, to the Ephesian Diana, and to Mary in the Christian religion. She is a symbol, also, of the divinity of the earth as Mother-of-all, hence like the German Hertha.<sup>2</sup>

We have stated above that Atterbom's notes were, for the most part, correct. Yet, the characteristic lingo, such as we found in the note on Thor, is not always as clear as it might be, and it is therefore difficult to determine whether they are correct or incorrect. That some of them were actually incorrect was discovered by the reviewer of the dictionary of Norse mythology in 1815.<sup>3</sup> But it is a strange fact that the more Atterbom's interpretations are studied the more the modern student will agree with him, and the more Atterbom's ideas seem to fit into an intellectual system. As far as the symbolism goes, we feel that Atterbom has at least a justification for his own Romantic point of view. Yet it is doubtful whether Frey, as the god of productiveness, of rain, and sunshine, and as the patron of all crops,<sup>4</sup> is the Norse analog of Bacchus, who was the "symbol of enjoyment" in a more specific sense. Again, Atterbom makes Necken identical with Njord. But Njord is one of the fourteen full-fledged Asa-gods, mentioned in Snorre's Edda (Gylfaginning), whereas Necken is a lower

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 9ff.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. above, note 1, p. 34, and text on pp. 34-35.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Sundén: "Översikt av nordiska mytologien," Femte upplagan, p. 80.

spirit, an elf-like water-sprite of the smaller bodies of water, and is more the product of popular superstition. In his commentary on Thor, Atterbom assumes that other Norse gods were invisible and lacked human form. But to all of the genuine Asa-gods, human form was attributed: "To them (Asa-divinities) are attributed human form and human conduct, but all on a higher and nobler level."<sup>1</sup>

But it must be added to Atterbom's credit that he tried to be self-critical in his analysis of Norse myths, became conscious later of his youthful shortcomings, acknowledged his mistakes, and was ready to rectify them. He writes to Tegnér, July 20, 1811: "In the notes to the above-mentioned poem ('Skaldarmal'), I made a couple of historical mistakes, which will be corrected in my next experiment in this line."<sup>2</sup> Atterbom sought modestly to approach Tegnér by means of his first "experiment." He sent the first number of *Fosforos* for 1811 to his more distinguished colleague and wrote: "I have there (in the beginning of the first number) ventured the first outline of a revival of the extinct myths of Sweden, and am certain that this new idea will interest you,<sup>3</sup> whose muse long ago began to charm us with Northern delight. I considered it unworthy that we should ignore our own forefathers' sacred remains, in a journal which is intended to embrace the most important objects for the culture of a growing literature. Whether any clear pictures can be developed from my shadowy lines, is a problem which can be solved only by you and your peers."<sup>4</sup> Tegnér, who believed in Atterbom's poetic ability,<sup>5</sup> received his "Skaldarmal" favorably. Atterbom writes: "Your (Tegnér's) estimate of my 'Skaldarmal' has pleased me heartily

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> "Ur Esaias Tegnér's papper," p. 39. He does not state the precise nature of the mistake, however.

<sup>3</sup> A free translation. Atterbom addresses Tegnér in the third person with "Tit." "title," implying a repetition of all titles every time he addresses him. For the sake of simplicity I have rendered this "Tit." by "you."

<sup>4</sup> See letter of April 19, 1811. "Ur Esaias Tegnér's papper," p. 38. As it happened, Atterbom here addressed, prophetically, the very poet who, fourteen years later, was to solve the problem in "Frithiofs Saga."

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Letter to Geijer of February 17, 1811. Jubelfestupplaga. V, p. 65.



and has, together with the approval of my friends and many of my enemies, encouraged me to make further attempts later in the same style and tone."<sup>1</sup> But Tegnér, who hated anything philosophical, had evidently objected to the Fosforistic interpretation of the myths, for Atterbom continues in the same letter:

"À propos of your view of my method of interpretation of Norse mythology and my Schellingization<sup>2</sup> of the same, I venture only to recall that the fundamental principles of nature-philosophy<sup>2</sup> gleam forth, though enveloped in a more or less perfect mythical dress, through all the mythologies (guda-systemer) which betray an evident relation to the Hindu mysteries, and this in a stronger or weaker degree, according to their distance from the maternal source. Take the eternal element of the Trinity; do we not find it in any mythology which has the least claim to speculative importance or deep religiosity? But with all this, I by no means have the presumption to force upon you the conception of an unripe youth; on the contrary, I am willing to admit that the doctrine of nature-philosophy still needs development in several points."

It is clear that, although Atterbom expressed his intention to correct objective historical mistakes in his notes, he clung to his independent, philosophical interpretations with persistent tenacity. To Atterbom the Norse myths are often, not so much a living religion or the symbolism of a living people, as our ancestors thought them to be, but rather an indigenous source for a new, national poetry, where the spirit and philosophy of the myth are more important than the objective divinities. This explains some of the freedom which Atterbom took with his objective facts. In a letter dated April 23, 1811, Atterbom first declares to Hammarskjöld that he has read the Edda, and then answers an evident criticism of his own notes to "Skaldarmal" by the Danish philologist Grundtvig:

"In spite of what Grundtvig may say to the contrary, I do not believe that he possesses a very clear vision for the inner structure

<sup>1</sup> Letter of July 20, 1811. "Ur Esaias Tegnér's papper," p. 39. Nothing more followed, though, in exactly that "style and tone."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. above: Thor represents the sun; Frigga the moon and the necessity in nature, etc.

of hyperboreism,<sup>1</sup> if he does not believe that Thor is the genius of the sun. I have made (in my notes) many other bold combinations, for example between the water-sprite and Freya.<sup>2</sup> I do not aim at a dead correctness to the letter; my purpose is to discover the lost fantasy of the North."<sup>3</sup>

And listen to the following:

"That Thor, without the knowledge of the Gothic populace, represented the supporting and mediating power, whose glory we imagine most beautiful in the form of the element of light, does not seem to be refuted by the story of Skinfaxe and the daughter of Mundelfare.<sup>4</sup> The meaning is not that Thor had his seat in the sun, but that the sun in certain *Beziehungen*<sup>5</sup> was an image of his majesty;—In other particulars, you look at my treatment of Norse mythology from my point of view: namely, not from the antiquarian (view-point) but from the poetic.<sup>6</sup> For me it is not a question of how the people in this or that age looked upon their dogmas—it is very likely that they did not reflect much about their meaning and continuity—but how a complete whole in Northern *Geist*<sup>5</sup> may be formed out of this crude mass; how this united whole may become a fitting costume for a living national poetry, which is not only sung from the chamber of one literateur into that of another, but can seize the Swedish heart with Swedish songs."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Hyperboreism" seems to have been a septentrionalized system of nature worship in which Atterbom dabbled to a considerable extent. The sun seems to have been the emanating center of this system. To me, it is a good illustration of some of Atterbom's so-called explanations.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. above, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Frunck: "Bref," IV, p. 285. Atterbom's purpose is, indeed, ambitious and pretentious.

<sup>4</sup> Skinfaxe (Icelandic, Skinfaxi) was the horse of Dag (Icelandic, dagr), whose mane illuminates air and earth. Here was apparently a contradiction to Atterbom's view that Thor was the genius of light, and attention had been called to it. The daughter of Mundelfare (Icl. Mundelfoeri) was Sol (Söl). Having been placed in the sky, she drove the steeds which pulled the chariot of the sun. Cf. Sundén: *Översikt av nordiska mytologien*, pp. 8 and 9. Here was a discrepancy in gender, for Sol is a feminine character in Norse mythology. Could Thor, then, be the symbol of the sun? Note the explanation of Atterbom.

<sup>5</sup> The German words are in the Swedish original.

<sup>6</sup> We get a glimpse here of Hammar skjöld's temporary attitude towards Norse myths, but we shall see later that Hammar skjöld had a very conservative idea about introducing it into Swedish art and poetry.

<sup>7</sup> Letter by Atterbom to Hammar skjöld, dated "Uppsala am Walpurgisabend 1811." Frunck: "Bref," IV, pp. 291-2.

The success of "Skaldarmal" and the justified reputation acquired by its unique notes gave the author a feeling of what came dangerously close to presumption. Consequently, when the first number of *Iduna* appeared, there followed an enthusiastic review in *Fosforos* by Atterbom, in which the honor of incentive goes to "Skaldarmal." At least, I do not see how there can be another plausible interpretation, and, undoubtedly, critics have had some justification for attacking the insinuation in the following extract from the review:

"That prophecy which resounded in our 'Skaldarmal,' concerning the return of Norse life to thought and song, and that appeal to the geniuses of Sweden which was expressed there and in several places in this periodical, is no longer a happy dream, it has not been made in vain."<sup>1</sup>

But Atterbom's pleasure and enthusiasm were not entirely selfish; he was happy for the sake of Sweden that the Gothic organ had appeared. He sees great hopes now for Swedish art and investigation of antiquity. In Geijer's immortal lyrics, such as "The Last Skald" (Den siste skalden) and "The Last Warrior" (Den siste k mpen), he detects the character of "Swedish magnanimity," a pious love for the heroic age of Sweden and—as a Romanticist—the holy aspect of art which through imagination is the highest herald of religion and ethics. "The Viking" (Vikingen) is "a Gothic romance," a masterpiece wherein we find the reflection of a simple honesty, a genuine expression of the true, original (ursprunglig) Norse nature; it is not dead antiquarian learning. "The Last Warrior," the reviewer finds, has a commendable ancient rhythm, and the bard improvises in "The Last Skald" in verse which is closely akin to Icelandic. Geijer had made frequent use of new imperfections, such as "klungo" for "klingade" and "svang" (Ger. schwang) for "svingade." This appealed to Atterbom, not only because Geijer here stood on German feet, but because the new forms were old. Atterbom adopts his customary method and compares, briefly, the Norse myths with those of

<sup>1</sup> *Fosforos*, 1811, p. 177. Cf. above, note 3, p. 34. For whole review, see pp. 177ff.

India and Greece. He looks at his Scandinavian ancestors here from an historical, political and ethical standpoint also. His forefathers were fighters because fighting was, historically, a part of their moral and religious conviction; the old Goths had a "restless fighting virtue and faith in warlike gods."<sup>1</sup> And, he avers in his spirit of a Rousseauite, if the (political) states are to become what they once were, the age of mythology must return.<sup>2</sup> In the recension of the Swedish translation of Nyerup's Edda,<sup>3</sup> Atterbom says he has been "pleasantly" superseded by *Iduna* and lauds the thorough description in it of the relation between superstition, myth and religion. Here, however, our Fosforist has a tendency again to become philosophical and obscure. In regard to translations from the Icelandic he is sensible and self-critical; he admits willingly his own linguistic limitations. He says very little about these for he confesses too great a weakness in Icelandic to compare them intelligently with the original,<sup>4</sup> and this in itself is a feature of Atterbom's interest which points in the right direction.

We have described the nature of the interest in the saga element in *Fosforos*, as it was exemplified in the leader of the Fosforists, Atterbom. It consisted (1) of enthusiastic reviews of modern Scandinavian literature based in any way on Scandinavian antiquity, (2) of sympathetic announcements of saga literature which had appeared in Denmark, and (3) of an original poem by Atterbom, accompanied by a detailed and philosophic commentary on Norse mythology. Henceforth the last of these three drops out; i. e., there is no more original "Gothic" poetry by a genuine Fosforist. In 1813 *Forsforos* died and was replaced by another annual, *Svensk Litteratur-*

<sup>1</sup> *Fosforos*, 1811, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> Nyerup's Edda had appeared in Copenhagen in 1808. It was translated into Swedish by Jakob Adlerbeth and published in Stockholm, 1811. In regard to Nyerup's Edda, Atterbom writes to Hammar skjöld, February 4, 1811: "If Nyerup's Edda is for sale in Stockholm, buy a copy for me à tout prix." See Frunck: "Bref," IV, p. 229. And, again, on May 5, 1811, to the same friend: "It pleases me beyond description that Adlerbeth's Edda has appeared. Would to God that it were only here." Frunck: "Bref," IV, p. 301. There is no lukewarmness about such expressions.

<sup>4</sup> *Fosforos*, 1811, p. 182.

*Tidning*. In this organ the interest in the saga age is limited to announcements and reviews. That Atterbom did not write another "Skaldarmal," as he had intended to do,<sup>1</sup> must be due, in part, to his activities along other lines of his cult, and to the appearance of other literary men and women, most of them members of the Gothic Society, who now sought to cover this national part of the field. And so, for the present, the future historian of Swedish literature began to lay the foundation for his "Swedish Seers and Skalds" (*Svenska siare och skalder*) by a systematic study of old Scandinavian monuments, the fruits of which could only appear very much later. He fostered the Gothic movement, temporarily, by a consistently expressed sympathy and by the writing and editing of occasional reviews.

As an illustration of the "consistently expressed sympathy," I need only cite the Fosforists' abiding attitude toward *Iduna*, as we find it in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning*, and for which Atterbom and Palmblad are jointly responsible. And it was not a lukewarm, polite formality, for politeness in literary matters at the time was out of fashion, but it was a real interest. The same policy adopted by *Fosforos* was continued in its successor. The review of the fourth number of *Iduna*, for instance, is extremely favorable: "With warm and hearty joy the reviewer announces a new number of this excellent periodical, which has contributed so much to awaken a love among our countrymen for our ancestors' hardy era, and has called attention to the only means whereby it might return with higher potency."<sup>2</sup> Then the Gothic organ is eulogized for its "manly enthusiasm" for all that is good and beautiful, and is criticized intelligently at great length. When the second edition of *Iduna* for 1811 had appeared, *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* came out at once<sup>3</sup> with a retrospect of *Iduna's* work. The former numbers, we are told, had had better original poetry, but the more recent ones more valuable results of antiquarian investigations. Eulogistic adjectives like excellent (*förträfflig*) and superb

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, pp. 37-38, and note 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for October 23, 1813, No. 42.

<sup>3</sup> November 13, 1813, No. 45.

(ypperlig) are plentiful and give the tone of the résumé. The fifth number of *Iduna* is hailed by the Fosforists' organ as a "precious gift" which has again been given to the public,<sup>1</sup> and the sixth number<sup>2</sup> as a "useful" contribution. In the same organ for 1819<sup>3</sup> *Iduna* is mentioned as one of the periodicals of the New School, and the eighth number<sup>4</sup> is characterized as the "clearest celestial signs" which appear on the contemporary horizon of Swedish letters; the reviewer is afraid he cannot find anything blameworthy in the "Fragments of 'Frithiofs Saga' which now appeared in *Iduna*."

And not only *Iduna* but all of the important Gothic productions received an almost disproportionately large amount of attention in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning*. It is this generosity of space devoted to reviews of national poetry that I wish to emphasize. The review of Ling's "Gylfe" (edition of 1812, Lund) runs through three numbers (No. 8 of February 27; No. 10, March 15; No. 12, March 27, 1813), and that of "Gefion," by Fru d'Albedyhl, two numbers (numbers 23 and 24 for June 11 and 18, 1814). Granberg's "Jorund" is lashed for maltreatment of saga sources through two numbers (numbers 20 and 21, 1814), and Geijer and Afzelius get two numbers full of commendation for their folksongs in 1815 (numbers 45, 46, for 11th and 18th November). Count v. Skjöldebrand gets due attention for an heroic poem in ten songs, entitled "Odin."<sup>5</sup> Rask's review of Hammarskjöld's publication of the Jomsvikinga Saga appears in number 14 (April 5) for 1817, the number for May 3 (No. 18) of the same year contains a review of eight songs of Ling's "Asarne" by the same eminent Dane, and Ling's "Eddornas sinnebildslära" is honored with 31 pages (pp. 545-575, numbers 35 and 36) in 1820. The editors are very generous, also, in the space allotted to announcements of books on Icelandic topics, or to translations

<sup>1</sup> October 1, 1814, No. 39.

<sup>2</sup> July 6, 1816, No. 27.

<sup>3</sup> P. 441.

<sup>4</sup> Reviewed in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for 1820, pp. 769ff., 785ff., 801ff. and 817ff.

<sup>5</sup> Stockholm, 1816. Reviewed in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning*, No. 48, for November 30, 1816.

from Old Norse.<sup>1</sup> Finally, in 1824, four numbers (57-60) are devoted to the recent dramatic works of Ling.<sup>2</sup>

It would be futile to give a review of all these recensions; the fact that they are there in conspicuous length is what is important for our purpose. It will be seen, however, that after about 1813 the nature of the study of ancient Scandinavian culture necessarily changed, even for the Fosforists. What had appeared in print before that time had been more a study and eulogy of Norse mythology in general and a rather indefinitely focused enthusiasm for all former ages; now, when individual sagas began to be translated or employed as the basis for poetic experimentations, the attention of the critic had to be concentrated on specific mythical or heroic sagas. The reviews, therefore, become scrupulously critical and exhaustive. For example, in Atterbom's somewhat prejudiced criticism of Granberg's "Jorund" (which we shall treat in detail in the next chapter) a great deal of the unmerciful attack is directed pointedly against the distortion of the historical Jorund as described in the original source: the Ynglinga Saga by Sturleson. This called for specific information. But we shall see that Atterbom had more than kept up with his contemporaries, was well prepared to review any saga-product that might appear, and certainly knew more about the individual sagas than some of those who used them in their poetry. And so his criticisms become real, erudite supplements to the original, and in some cases he adds valuable material which has no direct bearing upon the specific topic treated. This is the case with his above-mentioned recension of "Gefion" by Charlotta d'Albedyhll, which tells us as much, if not more, about Atterbom than it does about the authoress of the original poem.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. review of Afzelius's translation of "Edda Saemundar hinns Froda," pp. 65ff., 97ff. Review of G. G. Liljegren's edition of "Svenska fornaldrens hjeltesagor," pp. 129, 209, 241, 593, and (3) review of "Svenska folksagor," edited by H(ammarskjöld) and I(mmelius), Stockholm, 1819, pp. 449ff. All these in annual for 1819.

<sup>2</sup> "Blot-Sven," "Injalld Illråda," "Wisburs Söner" and "Styrbjörn Starke."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. next chapter, where analysis of "Gefion" is given.

This review,<sup>1</sup> which I shall take as an illustration, is prefaced by an exposition of the transition from Scandinavian literature in general to the beginning of Swedish literature in particular. It is the preface that I desire to mention here, as showing Atterbom's progress in his studies of early Scandinavian literature and history. As in "Skaldarmal" the tone of regret for a contemporary lack of interest in primitive Sweden is present here also, but it is a regret in the light of historical development. The original "Norräna-language" was preserved among the "republican and historically-minded Icelanders of Iceland," while Christian sentiment destroyed almost all traces of heathenism in Sweden.<sup>2</sup> The old letters disappeared probably before the language, yet the sound of "Gothic drapa" (*drapa*, a song of praise for a king) did not cease to vibrate in Sweden until after the middle of the fourteenth century, when Birger Jarl and his son, Magnus Ladulås, reigned, and when their court-skald Sturle Thordarson lived.<sup>3</sup> But from now on the old language was not understood. Swedish had become isolated and independent, no more skalds appeared in Sweden, and Icelanders stayed away for the very reason that they could not be well understood. The Ynglinga-dynasty died out in Norway in 1319, and then after the passing of the Norräna-Skald the knowledge of the Old Norse sagas in Sweden became hazy. The Danes had Saxo, who wrote an invaluable historical work in Latin, which, in spite of its faults, is as accurate as we can expect from a Catholic clergyman.<sup>4</sup> But the Swedes had no Saxo to collect material where such was to be had, and so it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that they knew anything about their ancestors' life and art, except that they were "blind heathens and worshipped three idols, whose names were Thor, Odin, and Frigga."<sup>5</sup> Then Atterbom criticizes previous historians; Lagerbring was really the "father

<sup>1</sup> Printed also in Atterbom: "Litterära karakteristiker," Örebro, 1870, pp. 115-135. References will be made to this edition, which is more accessible.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.



of Swedish history," but had no sense for mythology and poetry; Von Dalin was superficial, misunderstood these, and soon led others astray, so that *antiquarian* and *fantastic pedant* became synonymous terms.<sup>1</sup> In this same preface Atterbom pays tribute to the work of Verelius and Rudbeck the Elder, of the seventeenth century, showing that he had already commenced the foundation for his later exhaustive characterization of these men.<sup>2</sup>

But Atterbom is still a typical Fosforist and after seven pages of history there follows an introductory eulogy<sup>3</sup> of the authoress of "Gefion" and her art, in a language which in spirit reminds one strongly of the Prolog in *Fosforos*. It is a mixture of Fosforism and Gothism. There is talk of the "heavenly ability of poetry" and the idea is set forth that the sanctum sanctorum of man, the "pure feeling of the eternal, is expressed in the genius of music." Therefore, why should not daughters of these [ancestral] heroines follow the example of their mothers when "maternal sound of harps has returned to their mountainous region" (fjellbygd). We must cope with Germany and Denmark unless we wish to feel ashamed of ourselves. Iduna (the goddess of eternal youth; wife of Brage, god of poetry) had returned to Sweden, "the golden shimmer of her rejuvenating apples has begun already to beautify the new dawn of Sweden's internal independence."<sup>4</sup> The spirits of the Norrëna-song descend into their former sacrificial groves, "and so it ought not to astonish (us) if the women of the North share the flame which Urda<sup>5</sup> has lit in the hearts of Northmen. They have not forgotten that their mother Freya was generated by the element of yearning<sup>6</sup> or that her relatives, the maidens of the sea, praised the blissful secrets of the wave with string-instrument and song." Then after mention of Brynhilda, Aslaug, and Gudruna, he finally gets to the criticism.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 19-20 of Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 121-2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>5</sup> Urda generally conceived as the Norn of the Past. But see Sundén: Översikt av nordiska mytologien, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> See above in characterization of notes to "Skaldarmal," p. 35.

In true scientific style Atterbom gives first the complete original of the Gefion Saga,<sup>1</sup> and gives it correctly. He makes now a sharp distinction between pure mythology and saga, and pronounces "Gefion" more allegorical than historical. He calls attention to the mistake of confusing Allfather with Odin. Odin was the son and instrument of Allfather and was limited in time and space. He was the product of Fjolner (the concealed) and Fimbultyr (the incomprehensible divinity).<sup>2</sup> Much, again, is made of the myth of Freya; she is the allegory of Northern love, and then the Romantic idea is set forth that poets are chosen as interpreters of "inner models of love."<sup>3</sup> The tone of the whole review is extremely flattering; Atterbom lauds the fervor of the authoress for arousing interest in the Asa-myths in Sweden, and praises the first song of "Gefion" as a complete masterpiece, consisting of scenes and groups which together "form the most beautiful picture that Swedish poetry up to this time has given of Northern mythology."<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to note that Atterbom defends the superabundance of kings and nobles in the poem. Most of us would like to claim counts and kings as ancestors, is the frank opinion of Atterbom, and he has little respect for those that would not.<sup>5</sup>

One evidence of Atterbom's interest in the saga element is his increasing study of Fouqué and enthusiasm for his "Sigurd der Schlagentödtter" (1808). This evidence we find in Atterbom's reviews in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning*. In connection with the form of "Gefion," Atterbom adds: "Fouqué has by mighty efforts already proved the possibility of fulfilling the requirements of Icelandic verse-structure. Its wonderful rhythms, assonances, and alliterations possess a bewitching power which now resembles the Dwarf-mal (*mal*, song) of mild valleys, now the roar of storms and mountain torrents, mingled with the clang of swords against the shields of Val-

<sup>1</sup> See *Ynglinga Saga* by Sturleson, Chap. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Sundén gives the meaning of Fimbultyr as equivalent to God of the runes and attributes this quality to Odin himself. See "Översikt," p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> "Karakteristiker," p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 130-1.

kyrre.<sup>1</sup> In another review,<sup>2</sup> Atterbom compares the French classical tragedies of Corneille and Racine with the treatment of Norse sagas by Fouqué: "What can that kind of tragedies and epopées, of which the French boast so much, furnish to the Scandinavians, who possess a primeval antiquity which has descended from gods, and who possess heroic sagas with such a wealth of tragic depth and inner beauty in their composition, that no race on earth can show anything comparable? Take all such works as those of Corneille (Corneillerier) and Racine (Racineader) put together: What are they in comparison with a single Völsunga-and-Niflunga Saga, treated by Fouqué!"<sup>3</sup> Again, in connection with his recension of the eighth number of *Iduna*; "Why is this heroic drama (hjeltespel, meaning 'Sigurd der Schlangentödter'), the most powerful and most beautiful of all Fouqué's works, still so little known among the youth of Sweden? Neither this nor its Urtext, such as it is found in the Völsunga Saga in Björner's 'Norse Tales of Combat' (Nordiska kämpadater), should be missing on the book-shelf of anyone who claims to have a spark of love for Northern literature and poetry."<sup>4</sup>

In the annual *Poetisk Kalender* (1812-1822), edited chiefly by Atterbom, there are several poems of strictly national character, but not many which deal with the Scandinavian saga-age. The viking element is incidental, and is general rather than specific. No individual Icelandic sagas are dealt with, but motifs are often taken from indigenous popular tradition or saga and assume, then, a ballad-like character. Such is Afzelius's metrical romance "Var-Ulfven," the story of a lover who must pass fifteen years in the "dark forest" as a wolf (ulfr), and is based on a folk-saga from Southern Sweden.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 122. Atterbom refers, of course, to such imitations of the highly diversified Icelandic saga-structure, as are found interspersed in "Sigurd."

<sup>2</sup> Review of: "Svenska romantiska handlingar ifrån år 1796. Femte delen."

<sup>3</sup> "Karakteristiken," p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 261, nn. 1 and 2. The modern critic, I think, would hardly agree with Atterbom that *Iduna* is more beautiful than "Undine."

The exaggeration goes to the heart of the matter.

<sup>5</sup> *Poetisk Kalender*, 1812, p. 10.

Atterbom sings of a proud mermaid who captures a sweetheart of the shore,<sup>1</sup> Julia Nyberg (Euphrosyne) invents a historical romantic ballad on the basis of an inscription upon a newly discovered runestone,<sup>2</sup> and in "The Viking Maid" (Vikings-tärnan) the heroine sees from the shore her lover Ivar find a grave in the waves and then joins him.<sup>3</sup> Often the interest in antiquity takes the form of a poetic eulogy of those who have treated Old Norse material in some substantial way. The *Kalender* for 1815 contains two sonnets; one is entitled "The Last Runestone" (Den siste runstenen) and, from what we are told in a note,<sup>4</sup> is an indirect tribute to the Swedish antiquarian Rudbeck (the Elder) and Verelius; the other, "Gefion,"<sup>5</sup> is, of course, a direct recognition of the above-mentioned Eleonora Charlotta d'Albedyhl. "The North" (Norden) from the German by Amalia v. Helvig, and put into Swedish by G(umaeliu)s, is steeped in northernism, Swedish superstition, and Norse mythology.<sup>6</sup> In "Upon the Heights of Uppsala" (På Upsala högar), dated May 15, 1816, Atterbom seizes the opportunity for a solemn poetic reflection upon old times, when the maiden "went up in flames hand in hand with her betrothed."<sup>7</sup> In some lyrics, terms from Norse mythology are employed merely for external ornamentation and color; such are "Freya's Spinningwheel" (Freyas rock), by Hammarskjöld, and "The Warrior in the Northern Forest" (Kämpen i nordanskog), by Inge-l-gre-n.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Hafsfrun" in *Kalender* for 1813, pp. 69ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Skattgräfvaren och brudsmcket" in *Kalender* for 1820, pp. 89ff., and note, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Kalender* for 1821, pp. 54ff.

<sup>4</sup> Andra upplagan, p. 69. It is signed S<sup>+</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 90, signed H. R.

<sup>6</sup> *Kalender* for 1821, pp. 241ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Kalender* for 1817, p. 80; Poem, pp. 79-81.

<sup>8</sup> *Kalender* for 1812. Tredje upplagan, pp. 58-59, and annual for 1813. Tredje upplagan, pp. 65-67, respectively. "Freyas Rock." "Rock," apparently for "Spinnrock," is the name of the constellation Orion in southern Sweden. See note, annual for 1812, p. 58. The last strophe of Hammarskjöld's poem is a good example of Norse dress:

Sant Bröder! Förstummad är Baldurs mun,  
Och mer dricker Odin ej Mimers brunn  
Och Valhallas murar de störstas i kras;  
Men Freya hon spinner ännu.

In an honest, straightforward, confessional preface to the second edition of *Poetisk Kalender* for 1812-1813, dated June 9, 1816, we have further evidence of Norse sympathies. Atterbom himself is there speaking of his past encouragement from a small circle of literary sympathizers: "This circle existed, it expanded, and soon *Iduna* appeared, which showed even the more skeptical that the foundation for the re-birth of the new culture lies in the original Swedish sense of kinsmanship.<sup>1</sup> . . . The spirit of our pious, simple folksongs, as well as of our gigantic heathen monuments (*urminnen*), begin at last to be comprehensible, even to ourselves, since they have long been so to our kinsmen.<sup>2</sup> Novalis, Tieck, Oehlenschläger, and Fouqué have introduced us into their magic world of eternal love and unwithering youth, of loyal heroic power and victorious renunciation."<sup>3</sup>

In *Poetisk Kalender* for 1817 we get an interesting glimpse of a somewhat different phase of Atterbom's Norse studies. This volume contains "The Songs of Selma" (*Sångerna i Selma*), a "Fantasy from Ossian." They are not translations, but rather free adaptations in Swedish. These are followed immediately by twenty pages<sup>4</sup> of remarks on the character and problems of Ossian, and deal briefly with the viking element in the Ossian poems. In so doing, he takes issue with Macpherson in a matter of chronology. According to Atterbom—I am only giving his views—Fingal must have lived "at or shortly after, the days of Harald Fairhair" (863-936),<sup>5</sup> and bases his claim upon chapters 20 and 22 of the *Heimskringla* by Sturleson. It was during the reign of Harald Fairhair that the many viking expeditions and emigrations to Iceland, Scotland, and the Orkney Islands took place. "Harald himself conquered the Orkney Islands, ravaged the coast of Scotland,"<sup>6</sup> and went as far as the Isle of Man; and Sigurd, the Earl of the Orkneys, took possession of Caithness and Sutherland.

<sup>1</sup> *Poetisk Kalender* for 1812-13, Tredje upplagan, p. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xvii-xviii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-49, for 1817.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

"One knows that these islands for a long time were under the dominion of Norway; but not until the reign of Harald Fairhair (see Saga, Chap. 20) were they discovered and settled, as was Iceland, by mighty emigrating races."<sup>1</sup> These are the historical facts as Atterbom gives them to us, and he follows Sturleson religiously.<sup>1</sup> Now, in view of these facts, Atterbom reasons—and it must be admitted plausibly—that before this time (of Harald Fairhair) Fingal could not have lived; because the Orkney Islands and those islands situated between Scotland and Norway are in Ossian controlled by worshipers of Loduinn (Odin), who seem plainly to stand under the supreme rule of the kings of Scandinavia (Lochlin), or at least in immediate relation with Lochlin."<sup>2</sup>

Atterbom took an interest in folklore. Following the example of Brentano and Arnim in "Des Knaben Wunderhorn," and encouraged by the examples of his fellow-countrymen, Geijer and Afzelius, whose folksongs had begun to appear in 1814, Atterbom published a collection of folk-lore in *Poetisk Kalender* for 1816. The group of songs itself is, to be sure, not very remarkable and it is not a large group. The two divisions of ballad-like "romances" and those of a more distinctly lyrical character occupy only 119 pages in a pocket-size volume. Nor are they very important for us, since the oldest romances are taken from the fifteenth century and the pure "songs" are, for the most part, from the comparatively modern period of Gustavus Vasa (1521–1560) and his sons and from the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> But, as we might expect from Atterbom's usual method, his collection is prefaced by a lengthy discourse on European and Scandinavian folklore, about the sources of his own songs, about the fundamental differences between Northern and Southern poetry, and about the perfectly natural

<sup>1</sup> The exact time of Harald's western voyages, however, is not known, I think. Iceland was discovered in 863, the date of Harald's ascension to the throne of Norway, and was being colonized eleven years later. Harald is said to have undertaken his expedition about 880, or a little later. Cf. Hildebrand: Translation of "Heimskringla" (Konungasagor), p. 5, note 2, and p. 63, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Kalender* for 1817, pp. 43–44.

<sup>3</sup> See Förord (Preface) to *Poetisk Kalender* for 1816, p. x. This preface is dated December 20, 1815.

transition from Norse heathenism to Christianity in Scandinavia. The treatment of these songs often leads our enthusiasm back to primitive times. Then, almost imperceptibly, he makes digressions and tells us incidentally (1) of his early studies of the sagas, (2) of what we may call his Rudbeckianism, (3) of his later intentions along Gothic lines, (4) and of the forebodings of Christianity in Norse mythology. These indisputable testimonies from Atterbom himself need no discussion; I desire simply to present them here as such and I shall illustrate these four points by quotations in the order named.

(1) "The genius of skalds granted that my birth took place in a remote woodland. Here, from the very time I lay at my mother's breast, I grew up among sagas and songs, and from my third year, when the first book was put into my hand, to my tenth, when I for the first time left my parents' home, I seldom had any other company outside of them than those characters I got from Sturleson and Verelius, mingled with Corneille's heroes and the dreams with which I populated my horizon in great numbers."<sup>1</sup>

(2) We see in the second paragraph of his preface that Atterbom likes to think, like Rudbeck the Elder, of "the polar regions, consequently Scandinavia also," as the "primitive home of all the inhabitants of the earth and the historical seat of the celebrated (allbesungna) golden age."<sup>2</sup> Again, in speaking of the folksong:

"Among all the Gothic (i. e. Germanic) nations the consciousness finally awakened that they in origin, temperament, and language are only one people; that the North, the mother of all modern history, which from the beginning of the migrations to the present time, has created all that is great and eternal on earth, does not receive a foundation and a definite outline for her majestic ideal of a completed temple of art and literature, until she has bathed herself in the youthful spring of her primitive life," etc.<sup>3</sup>

This needs no further comment, either with respect to involved form or super-patriotic content, except that this Rud-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. xli.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. xxvi-xxvii.

beckianism did not seem actually to mar Atterbom's critical estimates of literature or history in other respects.

(3) In order "that the readers of Sweden (male and female) may in a clear consciousness grasp the nature of the North's, of Sweden's original feeling (*känslösätt*), of the indestructible character of the race, I deliver this simple wreath of the Northern flowers (i. e. folksongs) into their hands. [And I do this] with the hope of being able soon to produce a richer collection from the Icelandic saga-world, and any favor for the sake of the holy cause, will encourage me and my friends upon our mountain-paths."<sup>1</sup>

This hope was realized later, at least in part, by his translations of Edda-songs which are incorporated in "*Svenska siare och skaldler*."

But to turn (4) to a more important testimony in this preface. Atterbom's attitude toward Norse mythology here is neither superficial nor fanatic, but thorough and sensible. He sought the spirit and inner truths of these myths, and looked upon them as upon sacred forerunners of Catholicism. He wished, above all, to see their native spirit introduced into a national poetry and did not mean to introduce the external heathen culture bodily, as seemed to be the intention of some of the more radical Goths. "It is not my intention, as many seem to think, to re-introduce either the Asa-doctrines or Catholicism, either seriously or as external dress (*uniform-vis*), as some of Sweden's recent poets employ our ancestors' myths and names of divinities."<sup>2</sup> But Norse myths possess an intrinsic value, in Atterbom's opinion, which in sublimity surpasses other religious systems. Because of its Oriental origin and its development among the people of a powerful race, it "forbodes, most profoundly of them all, the coming and significance of the universal religion which descended to us from heaven in Christ."<sup>3</sup> In what Atterbom calls the "night-of-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. xxxix.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. xxvii. This whole theoretical problem of introducing Norse mythology into Swedish poetry is discussed in Chap. III to which I refer.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. xxviii. The contemporary belief that the Asa-religion was Oriental in its origin would not prevent a Rudbeckian, it seems to me, from believing that Scandinavia was the cradle of civilization. Atterbom seems to have believed both, in modified form. But about four thousand years



northern-lights" (norrskensnatten) of the *Völuspá* must be seen the "aurora of the days of the gospel," in order to see the wild beauty of Valhalla and not of the wildness alone. What is true of Norse mythology is also true of its history. The world of Christianity was developed from "this terrible warrior-strength" of the viking age, Balder was replaced by the person of Christ, Allfather took Odin's place, the viking-expeditions became crusades, and Freya becomes not only the goddess of earthly love but the symbol of eternal goodness."<sup>1</sup>

Referring in particular to the glory of the Holy Virgin and her symbolic position in Catholicism, Atterbom writes:

"One must understand the scattered forebodings (aningar) of this glory in the sagas about Frigga and Freya, the latter of whom was represented as delivered over to demonic influences and vices, and constantly searching for her consort, i. e., as a burning and unsatisfied longing, in order to understand, even in this case, the transition from heathenism to Christianity, from the viking period to the age of chivalry."<sup>2</sup>

One must also—and this is significant of Atterbom's progress in the study of the genetic development of Swedish culture—understand these sagas in order to comprehend "how the Northman-spirit in all changes has been essentially the same, in every-day life, in religion, and in song, and how each change has taken place merely to prepare a higher development of this inborn unity."<sup>3</sup>

Such was the character of Atterbom's interest in the Old Norse element during the Romantic period. To be sure, Atterbom did not carry out all his good Gothic intentions along creative lines, and sometimes his enthusiasm carried him too far in mere rhetorical praise of national material; but, after all, he made a conscientious effort to know and to further the knowledge of Scandinavian sagas. He knew more about the sagas than the majority of the Goths and was, therefore, a real

elapsd between the traditional date of creation and the immigration of the Asas into Scandinavia, which is supposed to have taken place during the last century B. C.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. xxviii-xxix.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. xxxi.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. xxxi.

"Goth." He admitted shortcomings and mistakes in concrete facts, but clung stubbornly to his own esthetic interpretations. He was an antiquarian, but a poetic antiquarian and a philosopher. He was, primarily, a lover, interpreter, critic, and historian of Norse myths; not so much a creative artist. In his theoretical views of Scandinavian myths, Atterbom is in danger of exaggerating the value of their meaning, but his theory about their introduction into Swedish poetry is sensible. Their power, symbolism, and spirit are the essentials, and he is inclined to believe that these internal characteristics are even preferable to those of Greek mythology.

What we demand for Atterbom is not unwarranted eulogy, but honesty and justice; a realization that even his early interest in the sagas was something more than a mere *prédilection d'artiste*. Many of his contemporaries were loath to admit this at first, and so his work was underestimated and good influences were often lost sight of in the din of polemics. But after the literary battles of the Fosforists had been fought, a kind of peace declared, and the final reckoning came, some glory had to be awarded to Atterbom while he was yet alive. That his friends recognized his ability is natural. Palmblad, in his biography of Ling, refers to Atterbom as "a friend who was at home in Old Norse monuments and who was especially good in remembering them."<sup>1</sup> Geijer ends his treatment of the Gothic society, in the last number of *Iduna*, with an expression of gratitude to Atterbom. And let us put Atterbom himself on the witness-stand again, taking the testimony of the defendant for what it is worth: Ling saw finally to his agreeable surprise that in Sweden he could hardly find anywhere "a more animated study (*betraktelse*), a warmer sympathy for the Northern saga-and-hero-world," than among those with whom he was once dissatisfied, i. e., among those who sympathized more with southern verse-forms, i. e., the Fosforists.<sup>2</sup>

It is a curious irony of fate that the most radical Fosforist

<sup>1</sup> See Biografiskt Lexikon, Vol. 8, Uppsala, 1841, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Atterbom: "Pehr Henrik Ling. Inträdes-Tal i Svenska Akademien den 29 Maj, 1840." Printed in "Minnesteckningar och tal." Senare bandet. Örebro, 1869, p. 43.

became the successor in the Swedish Academy to the most radical Goth, Ling, and, as such, became his biographer and critic.<sup>1</sup> In Atterbom's inaugural address on Ling, we find a splendid proof that the early saga interest of Atterbom had been genuine: he has continued his Norse studies, he has actually read the colossal epic "*Asarne*" (918 pages)—most contemporaries did not—and now gives a final, mature estimate of Ling. But Atterbom is still, in 1840, a Romanticist; a poetic esthete who looks up to Norse mythology with religious reverence. In this respect Ling could never have found a more worthy successor. Atterbom believes absolutely that our Norse forefathers' *Weltanschauung* was founded on a religious principle which was belligerent in its essence. He observes that even war may be a religious meeting especially when waged against the powers of darkness.<sup>2</sup> And he places the vikings under this category. They must often have appeared to him as celestial emissaries, and the tragedy of their lives was merely a mirror of the lives of the gods.<sup>3</sup> Norse mythology is a "hero-religion."

"Throughout the heroic life there was a religious meaning infused. The same war which the Asas in the invisible world carried on against the giants and the trolls, was carried on by their human analogs (afbild), the inhabitants . . . ruled by the Asas, against the uncivilized tribes who, in their savagery and in their gloomy wilderness, represented the palpable counterpart of the giants' home or Jotunheim."<sup>4</sup>

Atterbom, then, had retained practically the same theoretical view of Norse mythology for thirty years, ever since he began to edit the *Fosforos*, infusing into it an extraordinarily deep spirituality and meaning. The vikings then became the apostles of this extraordinary religion, and as such he thought that some of their bloody escapades might be excused. It is not our intention to describe further our Fosforist's activity in this line;

<sup>1</sup> Every candidate upon election to membership in the Swedish Academy must prepare and, upon his official entrance, give a public address upon the life and works of his predecessor. Cf. preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "*Inträdes-Tal*," p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 48ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 48.

what Atterbom did later as a mature historian of Swedish literature is well known. But let it be emphasized here that the introduction to "Swedish Seers and Skalds" contains fifteen chapters (217 pages) on the history of primitive Sweden, on Scandinavian myths and on the spirit, content, and metrics of Icelandic literature. Another chapter (Chap. 17) is devoted to folklore. And the foundation for it all had been laid while Atterbom was a militant Fosforist.

Atterbom was not the only Fosforist to be moved by the Norse spirit. As early as the fall of 1803, seven years before *Fosforos* appeared and two years before Atterbom became identified with the new literary coterie, the Friends of Belles-Lettres<sup>1</sup> (Vitterhetens Vänner or V.V.) exhibited Gothic tendencies. At a meeting of these "Friends" in November 1803, Per Neurling (1783-1856), a student at Uppsala, gave a short address on the literature of the old Goths. "The main purpose (of this literature), according to the speaker, was to praise the deeds and battle-fire of the heroes, for which reason the skalds also were highly respected and important men who dwelt at the king's courts."<sup>2</sup> Now, concerning Neurling's remarks we have a significant comment by Lorenzo Hammarskjöld, whose attitude toward Old Norse literature is next to be considered. Hammarskjöld, who was one of the charter-members of the V.V. and next to Atterbom the most prominent of the Fosforists, writes to Livijn, Nov. 22, 1803: "Last Sunday we [the members of the V.V.] had a meeting. [After speeches by two other members there] came finally Neurling's address on the literature of the Goths, which I liked almost the best. The style in it was so manly."<sup>3</sup>

Again on March 2, 1806, Hammarskjöld writes the same friend: "While I have been here (in Thomestorp, Östergötland) I have studied the *Hervarar Saga* and the *saga of Har-*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Introduction, p. 5. Atterbom became a member of this literary circle in the fall of 1805. He was the last youngster to receive an election. Cf. Hjärne: "Dagen före drabbningen," pp. xx-xxi.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. xlv. Hjärne adds the comment that we obtain here "a glimpse of that spirit which fully developed gave life and character to the Gothic Society and its literary activity."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hjärne: as above, p. 40.

raud and Bose. The former especially is rather beautiful. Hjalmar's death-song is truly elegiac.<sup>1</sup> . . . Angantyr's discourse, after he has murdered his brother with the deadly sword Tirfing, is a masterpiece. It is comparable to the chorus in a Greek tragedy."<sup>2</sup>

As a matter of chronology, then, the bitter antagonist of the old school, Hammarskjöld, read Icelandic heroic sagas at least seven years before the Gothic Förbund was formed, and even before he was associated with Atterbom. In a review of Oehlenschläger, published in the *Lyceum* for 1810, we again find traces of a national tendency.<sup>3</sup> But this tendency in Hammarskjöld is, after all, conservative and limited. The sagas found favor with him, in part because they were little known and were not French. Busy with his Gallophobia Hammarskjöld was prone to superficiality and haste, so that his work in the saga-field is spasmodic and of questionable value. His publication of the Jomsvikinga Saga,<sup>4</sup> in which Rask found several mistakes, and the collection of folk-sagas in 1819 was of no great consequence. Tegnér had no sympathy for Hammarskjöld whatsoever, and not one iota of faith in his ability. In fact, Tegnér goes to the other extreme and in his estimate becomes severe and unjust. When the Gothic Förbund sought to import an Iclander to stimulate the interest and work in Old Norse, Tegnér expressed the hope to Adlerbeth that the sagas would not land in Hammarskjöld's hands, who understood neither Icelandic nor Swedish.<sup>5</sup>

A study of the letters in Frunck's collection throws some light on Hammarskjöld's early attitude toward Old Norse literature. It seems undecided and inconsistent. Hammarskjöld certainly did not possess that constant enthusiasm for the Gothic Danes

<sup>1</sup> Hjalmar is killed in combat with Angantyr. See Chap. 5 of *Hervarar Saga* which contains also his death-song.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hjærne: "Dagen före drabbningen," p. 232. The date of the letter is given there as 1804, but this is a misprint corrected on the last page.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Malmström: "Svenska vitterhetens historia," IV, p. 370.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. above, p. 43. For Rask's recension see *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for April 5 (No. 14), 1817.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. letter to Adlerbeth of April 19, 1818. Tegnér: "Skrifter," Jubelfestupplaga, V, p. 150.

that Atterbom possessed. He writes to Livijn, October 1, 1810: "In the meantime I took a trip to Copenhagen, but could not endure it more than a week. The Danes are undoubtedly the worst of all flesh-eaters (köttätande varelser) that God has created. They are absolutely nothing but imitators and their coarse Germanomania is tenfold more unsavory than the Gallomania of our own worthy countrymen."<sup>1</sup> From two letters by C. A. Agardh (1785-1859) to Hammar skjöld, we learn that the latter was interested in Norse mythology but objected to its use in modern poetry.<sup>2</sup> And yet he thought it depended upon the method of treatment and upon who treated it. His friend Livijn, who was contemplating a drama on Odin, is encouraged thus: "I cannot but wish you firmness in your decision and tenacity of purpose with respect to your 'Odin,' although I do not understand how you can obtain dramatic unity in this subject."<sup>3</sup> The national tendency of Atterbom is also, of course, applauded by Hammar skjöld. He writes to Livijn, September 12, 1814: "You are right, Atterbom is the soul of the new sect and the one of all its members who has decidedly the truest calling. To be sure, he cannot become a Goethe or a Tieck for the simple reason that every genius must remain himself." . . . He is "too much of an ardent Christian to compete with Geijer for Brage's oak-leaf wreath,"<sup>4</sup> although, from my view-point, the dead Norse myth must be treated as in that truly beautiful 'Skaldarmal,' if anything of importance is to remain of the whole experiment."<sup>5</sup> In another letter to Livijn, December 12,

<sup>1</sup> Frunck: "Bref," III, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of December 6, 1810 (III, p. 175), and February 2, 1811 (IV, pp. 227-28). The precise nature of Hammar skjöld's answer must be based on a letter from Hammar skjöld to Agardh. This letter, however, is not published by Frunck and I have been unable, as yet, to learn whether this letter is in existence. The other occasion for Hammar skjöld's objections to the employment of Norse myths in poetry was his review of Oehlen-schläger's "Poetiske skrifter" in the first number of *Lyceum*. I have been unable to obtain a copy of this short-lived paper. Only two numbers ever appeared, one in 1810 and another in the following year.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of April 15, 1811, IV, p. 278.

<sup>4</sup> Referring, of course, to Geijer's bardic (or oak-leaf), Viking-Ossianic, national poems in the first number of *Iduna*.

<sup>5</sup> Frunck: "Bref," V, p. 351. Hammar skjöld himself, though, had used the names of the Old Norse gods as a poetic dress. Cf. above, page 49, note 8.

1811, we see that Hammarskjöld kept well posted on plans for future publications in Gothic circles and welcomed their appearance. Very soon there was to appear "an excellent translation" of the *Hervarar Saga* (by A. A. Afzelius), a new number of *Iduna*, Ling's "Gylfe," etc.<sup>1</sup>

Hamarskjöld did some work for *Iduna* of a philological and historical character. In the second number there appeared a description of a manuscript of the prose Edda, dated November 5, 1811. Another article by Hamarskjöld, dated March 5, 1814, appeared in the fifth number. This article is entitled "To the Editors of *Iduna*, Concerning Fr. Rüh's (of Germany) Recently Published Treatise on the Origin of Icelandic Poetry." Rüh's<sup>2</sup> had attacked the age and genuineness of the sagas; he had attempted to prove a Christian origin for Norse mythology, a wholesale borrowing from Greek and Roman myths, and held that Icelandic was, to a large extent, borrowed from the Anglo-Saxon.<sup>3</sup> In answer to this contention, Hamarskjöld comes out with an unmerciful attack on Rüh and with a strong, patriotic and enthusiastic defense of the Norse myths. Hamarskjöld is wild with excitement to think that anyone should attempt to steal his own mythology. Shallow as it may seem, an extensive and thoughtfully evolved mythological system is sufficient proof to Hamarskjöld for the human origin and original development of the Scandinavian languages.<sup>4</sup> And how could Norse literature have a Christian origin? Would a Christian monk furnish models for pagan poems?<sup>4</sup> With great pride Hamarskjöld refers also to national manners and customs which originated in Norse mythology, points out that it is an integral part of the *Volksglaube* and not a later interpolation. Incidentally we notice some effort on the part of Hamarskjöld to master Icelandic at this time. He has had under his care

<sup>1</sup> Frunck: "Bref," V, p. 397.

<sup>2</sup> Christian Friedrich Rüh (1781-1820). Rüh's article, which had appeared the year before (1813), bore the title: "Ueber den Ursprung der isländischen Poesie aus der angelsächsischen, nebst Bemerkungen über die nordische Dichtkunst und Methodologie, ein notwendiger Anhang zu den neuesten Untersuchungen."

<sup>3</sup> *Iduna*, No. 5, p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

(in 1814)—and this is important—"Icelandic manuscripts from various ages" for eight years,<sup>1</sup> but detects no similarity in letters between Icelandic and Anglo-Saxon, although he has had a manuscript, the Codex Aureus, in front of him.

Hammar skjöld was something of an antiquarian also. In the same number (5) of *Iduna*, we find in a note (p. 54) to an article on ancient "Funeral Mounds" by P. W. Tholander, that Hammar skjöld had in 1812 personally investigated or counted fourteen such funeral mounds near Tuna Sätessgård in Calmar Län.

Hammar skjöld's early attitude towards Norse antiquity seems, then, to be something as follows: he has a real interest in it, he welcomes publications of heroic sagas and studies them and their manuscripts, but is skeptical about the use of Norse myths in Swedish poetry. If they are to be employed at all the author should follow the channel designated by Atterbom in his "Skaldarmal," that is, the myths should be used merely as poetico-symbolic embellishments, or as a basis for reflection upon Scandinavian antiquity. But Hammar skjöld is a staunch, patriotic supporter of the genuineness of these myths. Let antiquity remain antiquity, however, do not attempt to recast it and re-introduce it bodily into modern literature. Contemporaries accused him of inaccuracy and dillettantism. In his judgments he is inclined to be prejudiced and influenced by the personal element of friendship or animosity. His theoretical views are rather conservative, a fact which is better illustrated in his attitude toward the introduction of Norse myths into plastic arts.

This attitude is found expressed in Hammar skjöld's last lecture on the history of art.<sup>2</sup> The classical conception of the universality of art is the predominating tone. A very injurious prejudice, according to Hammar skjöld, is the slavish imitation of the antique in order to obtain the beautiful.

"And yet," says Hammar skjöld, "on the other hand, I am just as violently opposed to the idea of those who advocate such a severe

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 91. Hammar skjöld does not state, however, how much he has studied them.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. below, p. 103 and note 3. These lectures were given in the spring of 1814 and were repeated in the spring of the following year.



nationalizing, that the commendable in Swedish art is restricted to that which a Swede only can understand. This is the right way to fall into mannerisms. Art is, on the contrary, like virtue, truth and faith, the property of all humanity, and its purpose is precisely to destroy all national and statistical boundaries and to unite the various kinds of peoples into one single race. And it is just as certain as the sun shines that the artist who has received the all-power of genius can make a Zeus or an Apollo . . . without destroying the given type . . . just as Swedish as a Thor or a Blader."<sup>1</sup>

Whether we agree with Hammarskjöld in this particular or not makes little difference here. We cannot deny the universality of plastic art, but whether a Swedish Zeus would be as Swedish as a Thor or not is at least open to doubt. That a national art based on Norse myths, was possible (see Chap. III) was proved later. But the important point here is that Hammarskjöld warns diplomatically against exaggeration in either direction and thus anticipates, in one way, the attitude of Geijer in 1817.<sup>2</sup>

Hammarskjöld's later interest in the national field does not differ materially from his early interest. There is seldom any of that consistent Atterbomian enthusiasm and the personal element and prejudice are still in evidence. But in Hammarskjöld's work as an historian of Swedish literature, there is discernible a greater friendliness toward the Goths and an effort for more thorough scholarship. His "Swedish Literature" (*Svenska vitterheten*), where he gives an account of the work that has been done in Old Norse literature,<sup>3</sup> is, to be sure, prejudiced and unscientific yet he is not blind to shortcomings in translations and poor codices, which shows an effort toward correctness if not an actual accomplishment.

The articles on Swedish literature from 1800-1828, which Hammarskjöld wrote in German for the Leipzig *Hermes* in

<sup>1</sup> Hammarskjöld: "Utkast till de bildande konsternas historia." Stockholm, 1817, p. 441.

<sup>2</sup> Geijer warned against exaggeration in the use of Norse myths in art in "Betraktelser med afseende på nordiska myternas användande i skön konst." Cf. below, Chap. III, pp. 120ff.

<sup>3</sup> See second edition by P. A. Söndén, pp. 178ff.

1823-1824, are unusually interesting and illuminating for our study of this phase of Hammarskjöld's activity. He lashes P. A. Granberg for his "Jorund" as unmercifully as does Atterbom. He calls the criticism by the Swedish Academy, which had honored Granberg for his tragedy, "trite,"<sup>1</sup> and believes that "Jorund" can serve as a model for the way a tragedy should not be written.<sup>2</sup> The feeling against the Academicians, then, still prevails in this Fosforist, even if, as we shall see later, Granberg deserved some of the adverse criticism. Tegnér he calls rightly the most important author in Sweden, but thinks he may be praised too much and admonishes readers to remember that he is a product of his time.<sup>3</sup> Later our historian speaks very favorably of *Iduna*; he calls "Frithiof" by Tegnér "excellent," recognizes the popularity of the Gothic organ, and terms its poems "glorious."<sup>4</sup> Afzelius is a special favorite of Hammarskjöld. After speaking of his work in the Eddas, Hammarskjöld says: "He has collected and edited the old, wonderful folk-romances with noble diligence and patience."<sup>5</sup> Charlotta d'Albedyhll's "Gefion" does not get the same enthusiastic reception from Hammarskjöld as it did from Atterbom. He admits that the form is beautiful, but declares that "the character of the little epic is neither heroic, nor romantic, gnostic, religious, nor idyllic, but high-aristocratic, in order to eulogize the family of the authoress by a mythical origin."<sup>6</sup> The Goth Geijer gets the comparatively large space of four pages<sup>7</sup> in Hammarskjöld's necessarily brief treatment, but the critic is interested mostly in Geijer's philosophy. The national "Agne" by Ling becomes a "fatalistic drama," written in the antique style, with a "large number of the most glorious songs in it," but "Eylif den Göthiske"<sup>8</sup> written by the same author after

<sup>1</sup> *Hermes*, Leipzig, 1823, No. XVII, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255-56.

<sup>4</sup> *Hermes* for 1823, No. XX, p. 355.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 306.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 321-25.

<sup>8</sup> Both "Agne" and "Eylif den Göthiske" are now published in Vol. 2 of Ling's *Samlade arbeten*. Cf. below, Chap. III, note 5, p. 103.

the French style in Alexandrines, is "the worst." As a Romanticist Hammarskjöld hopes that Ling will soon finish his work on the symbolism of the Eddas (*Eddornas sinnebildslära*)<sup>1</sup> and in his next article he lauds the system, thoroughness and deeper significance of the Eddas, which are now expounded in Ling's work.<sup>2</sup> The comment on Count von Skjöldebrand's "Odin"<sup>3</sup> presupposes some knowledge of the original source. Hammarskjöld has discovered that Skjöldebrand has followed the historical Saxo more closely than the Eddas, hence the characters are more men than gods and excite greater sympathy in the reader. On the other hand, this process—and notice the Romanticist here again—has drawn the author "from the charm of the wonderful."<sup>4</sup>

Hammarskjöld had an unmistakable admiration for popular poetry and in his introduction to "Svenska vitterheten" he praises Afzelius, Geijer and Atterbom, who published collections of folksongs after models in Germany, England and Denmark.<sup>5</sup> Here is sympathy, then, for the genuinely national. But Hammarskjöld did some actual work in this line also. Geijer in a note to his article on "The Old Norse Folksong" (*Den gamla nordiska folkvisan*, 1814) states that he has Hammarskjöld to thank for several notes on popular poetry.<sup>6</sup> And in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for March 27, 1813 (No. 12), we have an article by Hammarskjöld himself on old Swedish folksongs. He dwells on their importance for the study of the language and thought of the olden peoples, and for the development of the romantic art of poetry in the Scandinavian countries. He gives characteristics and titles of manuscripts of Swedish folksongs that have come under his observation. It is of some consequence to note—and this is the justification for this paragraph—that Hammarskjöld urges a collection of these

<sup>1</sup> *Hermes* for 1823, No. XX, pp. 330-31.

<sup>2</sup> *Hermes* for 1824, No. XXII, pp. 201-2. Cf. below, Chap. III, p. 104. "Eddornas sinnebildslära" was published in 1819. It remained a fragment.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> *Hermes* for 1824, No. XXII, p. 212.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. second edition, published by Sondén, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> E. G. Geijer: *Samlade skrifter*, Stockholm, 1874-76, I, p. 149.

folksongs a year before the Goths began the publication of them. Hammarskjöld writes: "It is about time that we follow the example of our kinsmen, the Englishmen, Germans, and Danes, and collect and publish these oldest relics of national poetry in which the primitive individuality is expressed so powerfully and often so beautifully."

From an historical and chronological standpoint there is no member of the New Romantic Movement who can serve as a better illustration for us than another charter member of V.V., a friend of Hammarskjöld, and later a leading contributor to *Polyfem*, Clas Livijn. The attitude of this young, interesting enthusiast toward the Norse saga is a natural one, and in many ways typical of his contemporaries, even among his own literary circle. It is the attitude of any would-be revolutionist toward a new movement. At first, it is not felt as decidedly patriotic, but as a poetic protest against French classicism and the Academicians. Then, later, when this tendency had assumed a more definitely national character, and was in danger of becoming ridiculously national, the shafts were often turned against the new Gothic mania. Not against the principles of the Gothic movement, be it noted, for the Fosforists were in sympathy with them, but against exaggerations in the practice of them. This was not done by Atterbom, but it was done by several of the other Romanticists. Hammarskjöld, as we have just seen, was opposed to an extreme nationalizing tendency,<sup>1</sup> and later (see below, Chap. III.) Vitalis and Dahlgren poked fun at it. This is the case with Livijn. We detect from the first a genuine interest in the sagas, with ambitious plans for two dramas and two operas based on them, but in the middle of the second decade, when the Gothic Förbund began to assume an alarming character, Livijn ridiculed its extreme tendencies and especially its member Ling.

The period of Livijn's active interest in Old Norse material covers about a decade, beginning in 1803. In an undated letter

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, pp. 61-62. Cf. also Sterner: *Den nordiska mytens användning i bildande konst*. Stockholm, 1881, p. 38. In *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for 1818, No. 49, Hammarskjöld criticises severely recent plastic productions, both of the Old and the New School.

from 1803, Livijn writes to Hammarskjöld: "I have now made the plan for a drama, 'Gyritha.' The theme is from Saxo Grammaticus. I intend to send it in (to V.V.), although it is yet uncertain, since I have not written anything upon it."<sup>1</sup> In a following undated letter he sends the plan of his intended three-act play to Hammarskjöld. The drama, however, was never finished and only a part of the first act was ever written. In another undated letter, undoubtedly from the middle of December, 1803,<sup>2</sup> we learn that the first act was completed and that Livijn himself was pleased with it, but says that "Gyritha" has reverted to its darkness and will probably never receive a place in the learned world through me.<sup>3</sup> In the same letter we learn that Livijn is reading English and Danish authors and is particularly interested in their Norse themes. He has not seen any "happier imitation of the Old Goths" than Gray's "The Bard" and "The Descent of Odin." Both, and particularly the former, possess a Pindaric loftiness and the strong, unbending character of the Northman. O, how charming is the bard's address to the king! You could imagine the sound of Ossian's harp calling down all misfortunes upon a wicked king and celebrating in song the fallen heroes! Ewald in the Valkyrs of his "Balder" has left us an imitation of his (Gray's) "Fatal Sisters," which is undoubtedly poorer than Gray's.<sup>4</sup>

A couple of years later, November 8, 1805, Livijn has another plan in mind. Again he confides in his friend Hammarskjöld: "I am pondering a great deal over an opera, where I could introduce our Northern divinities, and where all ballets, changes, etc., should be produced by visions" called forth by witchcraft à la 'Macbeth.'<sup>5</sup> Here it is Norse mythology and Shakespeare which hover in Livijn's mind simultaneously, and the prospective author is seeking an harmonious union of Old

<sup>1</sup> Hjärne: *Dagen före drabbningen*, p. 49. Mortensen puts the date of this letter December 1, 1803. See Clas Livijns dramatiska författarskap, p. 62, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> See Hjärne: *Dagen före drabbningen*, p. 59. (See note.)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

Norse content with Shakespearean method. In the beginning of 1806 he seems to have found a subject for his intended opera. He is to study all possible Gothic sagas, because he has his "head full of plans for an opera"; "'Balder's Death,' rimeless, and in the same meter that you find among Icelanders. As far as possible I want it Gothic and not Quinaultic. You know that the Goths sang in violent passion against one another. On this point see any one of the sagas."<sup>1</sup>

Livijn considered the old Icelandic sagas an essential part of Swedish antiquity, in which respect he resembled Atterbom, and so, in answer to a letter from Hammarskjöld,<sup>2</sup> Livijn commends his friend warmly for studying the old saga material: "That you have studied the old Gothic sagas pleases me so much the more, since that shall be my foremost study in time. I find it indefensible that our literary practitioners neglect entirely the ancient Swedish literature."<sup>3</sup> There could be no saner or more national thought expressed anywhere than is expressed here in this champion of the Fosforists. A plan of Livijn to study the "Gothic" language (here Icelandic, of course) was soon to be realized, at least in part. His friend Hammarskjöld was an assistant at the Royal Library in Stockholm, and Livijn hoped through his help to gain access to the treasures of the library and acquire enough critical knowledge of Icelandic to be able to express his "thoughts clearly and in Swedish concerning the poetry of the Goths." "I have now commenced to study old Gothic," Livijn writes; "it is a divine language, but I see that I cannot acquire the perfection which is necessary to translate such products correctly, before midsummer."<sup>4</sup> In other words, Livijn planned translations from Icelandic poetry and expected to acquire the requisite proficiency in the language in about two months. It was a bold and commendable plan, even if not feasible.

As a Fosforist, Livijn took a sympathetic interest in Gothic publications, was acquainted with past editions of the Eddas,

<sup>1</sup> See undated letter to Hammarskjöld, probably from February, 1806, in Hjärne, pp. 226-27.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of March 2, 1806.

<sup>3</sup> Hjärne: *Dagen före drabbningen*, p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 237. Letter written in April, 1806.

and was very enthusiastic about the coming translations of the Edda by Adlerbeth. He writes to Hammarskjöld, February 23, 1811:

"You cannot imagine how pleased I am at Adl(erb)eth's enterprise, in which I wish him good luck with all my heart, because I am certain that his work will be good. What I wish is that he might have chosen Sturleson's Edda, and preferably the Uppsala copy of it, on account of its Skalda-Kenninga, which as far as I know do not exist anywhere else. The reason is that we possess already both a rather good translation and the original of the Saemund-Edda by the Arne-Magnussen Foundation. You will do me a real favor if you let me know which one of the Eddas he follows and if the original text is included. This work will certainly produce a kind of epoch in our literature, when it makes the public acquainted with the literary products of our antiquity."<sup>1</sup>

Then, in this same letter, Livijn anticipates the danger which might arise from an abuse of these literary products and expresses the hope that Academicians like Markall (Wallmark) and Struthio (Wallin) will not, for want of other originality, concoct out of them a sort of Swedism which, "beyond a doubt, would be more distasteful than our neighbors' Danism."

Livijn's estimate of Atterbom's "Skaldarmal" is a good example of Gothism plus that prejudiced eulogy which one Fosforist was wont sometimes to give another. The tone is that of youthful *Schwärmerei*, expressed in a realistic, not to say naturalistic, style:

"At last, after several attempts, I have obtained a copy of *Fosforos*. "Skaldarmal" is above all commendation. You can easily imagine what I feel from the description; I already know it by heart; I walk back and forth on the floor, spit and snap my fingers, and repeat one tirade after another in a loud voice."<sup>2</sup>

"Skaldarmal" represented, then, for the present, both to Hammarskjöld and to Livijn, the national poem, *par excellence*, where Old Norse content and modern form were in harmony.

<sup>1</sup> Frunck: "Bref," IV, pp. 242-43.

<sup>2</sup> See letter to Hammarskjöld of July 13, 1811. Frunck: "Bref," V, p. 317. Livijn refers, of course, to the January-February number of *Fosforos* for 1811.

A month later (August 14, 1811) he has re-read his copy of *Fosforos*. He has found several poems which are "the product of a true inspiration" and of these "Skaldarmal" is mentioned first. He cannot praise it enough and believes the notes to "Skaldarmal" excellent. Atterbom's real purpose as a poet is not yet fully developed, though, Livijn believes, but "perhaps it will pass over into a striving for that primitive Norse spirit which is revealed in all Oehlenschläger's work." . . .<sup>1</sup>

In the same letter we get (1) a personal estimate of the Edda, (2) of Nyerup's edition of it, (3) additional commendation of Adlerbeth's undertaking, (4) the doctrine of Gothism as a cure for the contemporary insipidity in literature, (5) a warm welcome to *Iduna*, and, lastly, (6) some of Livijn's curious views on the influence of Christianity in Sweden. Livijn writes:

"In my opinion the old Edda has a kind of dark and solemn tone, combined with the simplicity which appears in Tieck's Volksmärchen but Nyerup has made this tone familiar instead of simple, and instead of being solemn it has a trite holiday-attire (helgdagsplatt). But, nevertheless, we owe Adlerbeth a large, yes, an almost enormous debt of gratitude for his enterprise which will certainly be worth while. All those who have been here (in Kongslena) have read it (Adlerbeth's Edda), all with a kind of astonishment, almost doubt, that anything of that kind could ever be written. If anyone, equipped with spirit and power, should arrive at this time and preach the old Sveogothism, I am certain that many, particularly of the younger generation, would take their position beneath the banner of power, against that dullness which has been so indefensibly preached by the *Academic Journal (för Litteraturen och Teatern)*." . . .

"The Lord is mighty! can be exclaimed with justification when one sees *Iduna* and learns [the name of] the author." . . .

"'The Viking' is a divine production, the first of its kind in Swedish. I am not so satisfied with the translations; Vegtams Kvitha, the only one I had the opportunity to compare with the original, is, I believe, slavishly faithful (to the text)."

"You ought to be all the more certain that I like 'The Last Warrior' and 'The Last Skald,' since these strengthen my idea that Christianity has removed power and energy from Sweden."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Hammar skjöld. Frunck: "Bref," V, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> For all quotations above, see *ibid.*, pp. 336-37. In answer to this last



This outburst of youthful enthusiasm needs no discussion; it cannot be taken very seriously, but it does serve as a striking illustration of a mixture of radical Gothism and Rousseauism.

In 1811 Livijn has another plan for a Norse drama. He writes to Hammarskjöld, April 2:

"What do you think about me? I intend to compete with Polyhistorio,<sup>1</sup> and also produce an 'Odin.' The undertaking will, to be sure, be rather difficult, but if I am successful it will procure for me a double honor and decide the victory for us."<sup>2</sup>

Hammarskjöld doubted the intrinsic unity of the subject<sup>3</sup> and Livijn writes again, April 22, 1811:

"You do not believe that I can possibly obtain unity in 'Odin'; I have almost the same opinion, but even if I am to drive my heroes together from Egypt, as Leopold (has done), they must come together. . . . The contrast between the proud and arrogant but civilized Roman and the proud and arrogant but uncivilized barbarian will be the fundamental theme."<sup>4</sup>

As was often the case, Livijn's creative interest in Old Norse literature hardly went beyond the mere plan. It is a little difficult to decide just how much he actually accomplished in this line; some of his work was destroyed, what he did not destroy was mostly fragmentary, and very little of what survived was ever published. We have seen from his letters, however, that his early creative interest in the saga always suggested some dramatic scheme to his mind. It is quite certain, then, that beyond his ingenious attack on Gothic extravaganzas later,

contention of Livijn, Hammarskjöld writes: "If 'The Last Warrior' and 'The Last Skald' have strengthened your conviction that Christianity has injured our nation, then these poems must have produced an entirely different effect from the one intended by the author. . . . And besides, how much Christianity is there not in Icelandic mythology?" See letter to Livijn, September 12, 1811. Frunck: "Bref," V, p. 353. Hammarskjöld agrees, then, with Atterbom that the spirit of Christianity existed in its embryonic state in Norse mythology.

<sup>1</sup> The Fosforists' nickname for the Academician Gustaf af Leopold. See Appendix. He had written a drama on Odin in the French style. See Introduction, pp. 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> Frunck: "Bref," IV, p. 268.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. above, p. 67, note 3.

<sup>4</sup> Frunck: "Bref," IV, pp. 283-84.

Livijn's Norse plans revolved around, and were limited to, the drama "Gyritha" (1803), the opera "Balder" (1806), "Odin" (1811), and the trilogy "Visbur" (1813). And we must notice in passing that the date of the first two is, in either case, several years before the Goths appeared, as such. Fortunately for us, the dramatic work of Livijn has lately been investigated by Mortensen,<sup>1</sup> who has published the rough drafts of Livijn's Norse dramas that still exist among his papers. From these scanty remnants we can now obtain some idea of what Livijn intended to do in this field. I shall limit myself here to a very brief comment; for the details I refer to Mortensen's monograph.

Nothing has been found of either "Balder's Death" or "Odin." In all probability they never existed beyond the mere titles.<sup>2</sup> But we do possess two small fragments of "Gyritha" and "Visbur." The theme of the former, the first of Livijn's dramatic attempts, is based on the saga found in Saxo, part 1, book 7. Halfdan, Prince of Scania, has fallen in love with the proud and amazon-like princess Gyritha, the last of her race. He must win her by fame and bravery in war and for this purpose sets out for Russia, where he fights against the Swedish King Alver. A report is circulated that Halfdan is dead, and after many vicissitudes a Saxon, Sivard, is successful in winning the hand of Gyritha. Halfdan is notified, arrives just as the wedding is to be celebrated, kills the bridegroom and most of the guests, and obtains Gyritha. Livijn takes this story, adds in the French style a confidante, Afhilda, and a malicious rival and she-devil, Ulfhilda, both of whom are taken from a novel<sup>3</sup> by the Dane Suhm, which is based on the same saga, and makes a plan for a three-act drama. The unity of action is strictly observed, the unity of time is indefinite, and that of place ignored. The fragment, a trifle more than five scenes of the first act, is written in rather commonplace prose, without dignity or eleva-

<sup>1</sup> Mortensen: *Clas Livijns dramatiska författarskap*. Stockholm, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 119. Cf. also, p. 193. Mortensen suggests here the possibility that in case of "Odin," Livijn intended to write a regular drama à la Leopold to be a parody of the same.

<sup>3</sup> "Gyritha eller Danmarks Befrielse, Prisen For Kierlighed," 1774.

tion, but has occasionally a certain power and interest. Ulfhilda is by far the strongest character in the fragment; she is a cunning intriguer, who, in strong, masculine language with feminine ingenuity, and under the pretense of patriotism, plans the abduction of Gyritha by Sivard to further her own love-interests. She is a modern heroine as Livijn would have her. We have here the beginning of a drama, half French, half Romantic-historical. We can only regret that it was never completed, for it would have served as an excellent transition-type.<sup>1</sup>

In 1813 Livijn entertained a gigantic plan to write an opera in the form of a trilogy on Visbur. Snorre Sturleson's Ynglinga Saga (Chapters 16-18) tells the tragic tale of Vaulande, Visbur, and Domalde, grandfather, father and son, respectively. The old fate-idea, based on crime, hovers over the whole brief narrative by Snorre, though the main interest undoubtedly centers about Visbur. Vaulande has forsaken his wife Drifva and is finally strangled by a nightmare; Domalde was in time of famine sacrificed to the gods; and upon Visbur who, after desertion and remarriage, refuses to give up his former wife's bridal gift, the curse of his race had been placed. A part of the bridal gift, a neck-ring, was to be the death of the best of his kin, and racial murder should always prevail in the family. Using this saga and a Chronicon Finlandiae, Livijn made a brief outline in prose of "Visbur." It was to have three acts and was to be full of conjurations and witchcraft. It was to end in a general slaughter and suicide and Odin himself was to appear in the last act as a ghost; which gives Mortensen a good reason for believing that the plan of "Visbur" was modeled after Fouqué's trilogy "Der Held des Nordens."<sup>2</sup> But our author never got beyond the fragmentary plan; the scheme was too colossal and, as Mortensen adds,<sup>3</sup> it was left for Richard Wagner to write a trilogy on a primitive Germanic theme.

<sup>1</sup> Mortensen: *Clas Livijns dramatiska författarskap*, p. 75. For detailed account of whole plan, fragment, and Suhm's influence, see pp. 62-75.

<sup>2</sup> "Sigurd der Schlangentödter," Berlin, 1808: "Sigurds Rache"; "Aslauga," Berlin, 1810. Cf. Mortensen, as above, pp. 244-45.

<sup>3</sup> Mortensen: *Op. cit.*, p. 243.

However ardent Livijn's love for the saga element was, he objected most strenuously to the abuse of it. When the "old Norse power" and Norse mythology became the objects of an empty, rhetorical idolatry, Livijn decided to give a signal of warning. The method of warning was similar to the attack made later upon Norse myths by the Academician Stjernstolpe;<sup>1</sup> the Norse divinities of both sexes pay a visit to Mt. Olympus where they frighten everybody almost to death and put the Olympians to flight. But Livijn's ingenious ridiculing of the Gotho-mania was done in a friendly spirit and with the serious intention of bettering conditions, as is shown by his sober reflections on the Norse cult at the end of his article. The warning, in the prose-form of a dream, appeared in No. 3 of the short lived *Life and Death* (*Lifvet och Döden*), 1816, and is really a thrust at both mythologies. He finds the Olympians a rather triste company. "The old man Jupiter (Jofur) was recognized at once; he had seen him hoisted up and down on the opera, with flashing thunder-bolts in his hands. Minerva is studying economy and finance, Apollo stood with his hands in his pocket and pondered on the possibility of winning a prize on the 20th of December,<sup>2</sup> and the arrows of Cupid seemed so dull that they could be used only to pluck the strings of the lyre, etc. The whole company reminded one of yawning guests at some state-feast."<sup>3</sup> But the Scandinavians arrive with a frightful noise and start a grand fight with the Olympians. Thor howls like all the wolves of the North put together, and when Brage sings, Apollo puts his fingers in his ears and flees. The rest follow. The new gods are to be lords of all Swedish poets hereafter, and to possess the sole right to appear in opera, ode, or elegy.

It is noteworthy that Livijn's ideas concerning the employment of Norse myths were fundamentally the same as those of Geijer concerning their use in the plastic arts.<sup>4</sup> He implies that we must have sensuous form and definiteness in some way,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. below, Chap. III, pp. 115ff.

<sup>2</sup> The classical Swedish Academy awarded its prizes on this date.

<sup>3</sup> Mila Hallman: *Clas Livijn*, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> See "Betraktelser i afseende på de nordiska myternas användande i skön konst," 1817. Cf. below, Chap. III, pp. 120ff.

and we, who live in a new age when the gods in question are no longer worshipped, may employ the names from Norse myths only as poetical terms to give our ideas a certain sensuous definiteness. Nowadays the use of such terms, however, is often nothing more than a mere substitution of Norse names for Greek, and an affected pedantry is the result. On the other hand, if the scene of action is localized in that remote period when popular faith embraced Odin and Thor, and the atmosphere and costume are generally Norse, the names of the Old Norse gods are the most suitable.<sup>1</sup> This is, in brief, the content of the serious part of Livijn's attack. It agrees, it seems to me, with Geijer's ideas: to obviate all danger, do not separate the Norse myths from their own age, and if you do, beware of excess.

The climax of Livijn's ridicule appeared in No. 19 of the above-mentioned *Life and Death*. It was a cruel parody on a solemn poem by Ling, entitled "In Memory of the Countess Hedvig Cronstedt" (Minne af grefvinnan H. C.), into which Ling had introduced the greater part of Norse mythology. Livijn calls his poem "In Memory of the Unwieldy Norse Power" (Minne af den obäkliga nordiska kraften), writes it in the same meter as his model, provides it with explanatory notes as Ling had done, and like Ling wants his poem set to music, and especially the explanatory notes. Ling's elegy adapted itself unusually well to irony and Livijn's parody is a masterpiece of its kind. The parody itself has true wit and the notes are excruciatingly funny. It caused bad blood, however, and the author felt constrained to make the explanation which appeared in the last number of *Life and Death*, in May, 1816. For further details and examples in parallel columns of both model and parody I refer to Wirsén and Hallman,<sup>2</sup> both of whom characterize the parody as "cruel." Incidentally, the character of the parody shows that Livijn must have been pretty well acquainted with Norse mythology in order to write it.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wirsén: *Clas Livijn*, pp. 38-39. Contains quotations.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wirsén: *Op. cit.*, pp. 39-41. Cf. Mila Hallman: *Clas Livijn*, pp. 88-91.

It appears, then, that Atterbom was the only Fosforist ever to finish an imaginative work based directly on Norse mythology. Hammarskjöld objected to its use unless it was remodeled like "Skaldarmal"; and Livijn's dramatic work, based on individual Norse sagas, was fragmentary. Yet we must not underestimate the importance of the zeal with which the Forforists, almost to a man, sought to encourage the study of Old Norse literature. This is the irrefutable testimony of letters written by the various members of the new movement. The correspondence of the minor members of the group brings out the same widespread sympathy and enthusiasm as that of the more prominent members.

C. A. Agardh (1785-1859), adjunct professor of botany and economics at Lund University and a warm associate of the New School, vents his feelings to Hammarskjöld, November 2, 1810. He has read three numbers of *Fosforos* and objects to the superabundance of Hellenism in them. But he discovers one strophe in the Prolog which is particularly beautiful. He writes: "How beautiful, on the other hand, is Atterbom when he uses Gothic images, when he speaks of Thor; it is easier for us to believe that Thor still illumines his sons than that Phoebus should do so!"<sup>1</sup> That Agardh took an interest in Ling's work is evidenced in the same letter, and later he takes issue with Hammarskjöld with respect to the employment of Norse myths in poetry. Agardh believes that Hammarskjöld's objections to their use may all be refuted, though it was not his (Agardh's) business to refute them. He adds: "Ling and Tegnér are agreed on the excellence of the Gothic myth."<sup>2</sup> That Agardh kept in touch with Danish literature of the Old Norse style is seen in a letter to Hammarskjöld of February 2, 1811. He is to send his friend some of Oehlenschläger's works as well as "Norse Mythology" by Grundtvig. But it is curious to note that Agardh also objects to an exaggeration of the new tendency. He writes: "He

<sup>1</sup> Frumck: "Bref," III, p. 164. Cf. Prolog to *Fosforos*. Also note 4, page 32 of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Frumck: "Bref," III, p. 175. Letter to Hammarskjöld of December 6, 1810.

(Oehlenschläger) has published a new volume of his poetry, which does not seem to me to possess the value of the others. He has fallen too much into the old tone of the North. He has even imitated its faults."<sup>1</sup>

Those members of the new movement who were neither Goths nor Fosforists, technically, but who made use of the sagas and Norse mythology for the purpose of poking fun at the extravagances of the New School (see Chap. III) should be mentioned here. The most important of these were Vitalis (Erik Sjöberg) and Carl Fredrik Dahlgren. The character of their humorous products themselves shows that they knew something about Norse antiquity, and a study of their lives and works reveals a Gothic activity of a positive character as well. But this activity seems, for the most part, to be of a purely general type. Especially is this the case of Vitalis. His Gothic poems, if they may be called such, are patriotic and national, but are not based on any definite saga-sources. They deal with king and fatherland, with Swedish iron and mountains, and with occasional reflections on the primitive ages. "The Son of Nature" (Natursonen), as may be guessed from the title, is Gothic only in so far as it is Rousseauic.<sup>2</sup>

Dahlgren wrote several poems in a patriotic spirit, but his chief importance for Gothism was as an organizer. It was he who really founded the "Antiquarian Society" (Sällskapet för forntida minnen) in Linköping in 1823, and he did much active work subsequently. He made speeches and gave books to this body, whose object was to "quicken the feeling of national patriotism, pure morality, and hearty friendship."<sup>3</sup> Of more specific value for Gothism was Dahlgren's connection with the Manhems-Förbund. His biographer, Arwidson, writes as follows: "In conjunction with C. J. L. Almquist, Dahlgren founded in 1815 the so-called Manhems-Förbund. Its purpose was to arouse in growing youth an interest in our antiquities and love for our historical monuments; in a word, to make the edu-

<sup>1</sup> "Frunck: "Bref," IV, pp. 227-28.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Östergren: Vitalis, p. 50. Östergren believes "Natursonen" to be an imitation in the Gothic genre.

<sup>3</sup> See Arwidson: Introduction to Vol. I of Dahlgren's *Samlade arbeten*, Stockholm, 1847, p. xv.

cation of the young as Swedish as possible, with the high examples of the forefathers as models for a new, powerful, and patriotic generation. Consequently, it was for the young what the Gothic society was for the old. Others may judge the possibility of attaining the desired end in this way; but, in any case, the effort was noble and magnanimous. At the meetings the young men read selections from our old sagas to one another, and lectures were held on the Norse myths and on praiseworthy deeds from our historical chronicles.<sup>1</sup> On special occasions Dahlgren himself delighted the members of the Förbund with speeches, many of them sparkling with wit and the love of life."

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xiii-xiv.



## CHAPTER II

### THE NON-ROMANTIC INTEREST IN THE NORSE SAGA

"Kärleken till skaldekonst i allmänhet, och fäderneslands-känsla isynnerhet, hafva kommit mig att skrifva i meter, och att begagna den hos oss för litet kända och värderade, högst interessanta nordiska mythologien."

Charlotta d'Albedyhll: Slutmärkning to "Gefion."

There was no enthusiasm among the Academicians for Old Norse themes but, on the other hand, it would be an injustice to accuse them of a constant and furious hostility. The old myths had already been treated in the French style by some Gustavians, notably by the king himself, Gustavus III., and by Leopold; so that at the beginning of the national movement Norse mythology was by no means unknown, even to the members of the Old School. And so, in 1810, when the field of Norse myths was being explored in Denmark, the *Academic Journal för Litteraturen och Theatern* not only tolerated such exploration but advocated a similar movement in Sweden. No. 193, for August 20, 1810, contains an announcement of Nyerup's Edda and gives the story of Suttung's mead. The Danes, the reviewer thinks, should be given credit for their interest in Old Norse history and myth, and Norse mythology ought not to be as unknown to the Swedes as it is, since it has already been used by "several German and Danish poets." The excuse seems to be that one does not like to learn Icelandic. Again, the recension of the first number of *Iduna* in the same *Journal* (numbers 195-98, 1811) contains an expressive regret: "The love for our antiquities and our history has cooled considerably among us (in Sweden) if it has not entirely died out." Later on, to be sure, when militant Gothism was thought to be alarming, the Academic attitude changed; but in the beginning of the decade 1810-1820 there was an appreciable sympathy for national material among the conservatives.

The Swedish Academy itself was not opposed to literary creations with Old Norse content provided they measured up to the traditional standards of form and style. In 1812 the Academy awarded its highest prize to Per Adolf Granberg (1770-1841) for a so-called "lyrical tragedy in three acts" on an Old Norse subject, entitled "Jorund." And, in his presentation speech to the prize-winner, the director of the Academy displays an idealistic view of the viking and sees great possibilities in the theme at hand.

"It was from the skald that the warrior of antiquity expected his most permanent reward; with his eye fixed upon the harp of the bard,<sup>1</sup> the Gothic champion raised his sword, and, if a glorious death snatched it from his armed hand, he knew that the memory of the exploit would live through the ages in the eulogy of song. You [Granberg] have, my lord, called forth a theme from the old chronicles of Sweden which has the possibility of exciting high impulses and public sacrifices."<sup>2</sup>

This complimentary and highly commendable sentiment would have applied admirably to other themes from the sagas, and was prophetic of what actually took place later, when Norse themes were treated by other more Romantic authors; but in the specific case of "Jorund" the judgment of the Academy was much too favorable. The work evidently fulfilled certain formal requirements of the Academy, it possessed some really good verse, and exhibited an occasional glimpse of genius, and the author had been publicly honored by the Academy before.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the theme of "Jorund" was new to contemporary Academicians and was patriotic in its essence; and so as a bit of original poetry, it captured the highest reward.

"Jorund" is an interesting concoction and Atterbom calls it rightly "a peculiarly constituted arabesk."<sup>4</sup> It is not a tragedy

<sup>1</sup> Neither the director nor Granberg himself made any distinction between "skald" and "bard."

<sup>2</sup> A free translation. See Svenska Akademiens handlingar ifrån år 1796. Sjette delen. Stockholm, 1817, p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> According to Nordisk Conversationslexikon, Granberg received no less than five prizes from the Academy. He was a very productive writer in several fields. He wrote historical works and his dramas "Svante Sture" and "Mårta Lejonhufvud" were played forty-two times between 1812-33.

<sup>4</sup> Literära karakteristiker (Vol. 7 of Samlade skrifter), Örebro, 1870, p. 105.

in the modern sense at all but a lyrical melodrama, interspersed with reports of deaths and the flowing of blood somewhere off the stage. It is a bardiet à la Klopstock, steeped in artificial sentimentality with little or no local color or action. The main dialog is written in good blank verse, but, unfortunately, there is very little of it and to his prefaced outline of the argument the author adds apologetically, as it were, that perhaps this meter is altogether too new. As a result, we have a great variety of meter, distributed in the form of rimed duos, trios, and choruses of either bards, maidens, or fighters, and even an invisible choir is heard. The whole is a combination of Sturleson, Shakespeare, and Granberg. Sturleson provides the name and certain historical characterizations, "Macbeth" a part of the plan and the idea of an oracle, and Granberg, after distorting the original saga almost beyond recognition, motivates the "tragedy" by fate. The French confidante is not wanting and we may say that the unities are observed. The scene is laid in, or in the vicinity of, Uppsala, the principal characters are few and the plot is simple. Granberg makes Hake, who is said to have ruled three years, reign but one day over Sweden,—for no other reason, apparently, than to accommodate the action to the unity of time. From the dramatic viewpoint the stage directions are the most meritorious part of the whole bardiet, and at times suggest a setting of real viking beauty and picturesqueness. Granberg is not blind to the contemporary ignorance of Norse mythology and saga and provides brief explanatory foot-notes to his tragedy.

The Ynglinga Saga by Snorre Sturleson (Chapters 25–28) contains the historical background of "Jorund." Hagleik was a rich and stingy king who reigned over Sweden (Svithiod) quietly instead of going out on viking expeditions. He was always surrounded by harp-players, fiddlers, and magicians. Hake, a mighty sea-king, with twelve champions, including Starkad the Old, set out for Sweden, killed the inactive Hagleik and his two sons, and became ruler of the country for a period of three years. In the meantime Jorund and Eric, sons of Yngve, had grown up and won renown and Hake had sent his own warriors away. Jorund and Eric made use of their

opportunity; they came to Sweden, were welcomed by the people, and set out for Uppsala to recapture the throne for the Yngve race. In the battle that follows Eric is slain and Jorund is at first forced to flee, but Hake has been mortally wounded in the fray; he is laid "almost dead, or dead," upon his ship, the burning boat is sent out to sea, and Jorund returns to become king of Sweden. Chapter 28 of the saga, which Granberg disregards entirely, tells us further that Jorund was finally hanged by King Gylög while on a plundering expedition to Denmark.

Granberg states in his preface that he followed the opinions of those also who applied Saxo's story to Sweden. But he cannot have taken very much from the Danish historian. There is no Jorund mentioned in Saxo Grammaticus. The two champions, Geigad and Svipdag, are mentioned, however, both in Saxo and in Sturleson (*Ynglinga Saga*, Chap. 25), and Starkad the Old, who is mentioned in Sturleson in the same chapter as being the greatest fighter at King Hake's court, appears in Saxo, Book 6, as a very redoubtable Danish warrior. Granberg makes Starkad a native of Sweden who had left the Swedish court because of dissatisfaction.

There were, in fact, many skalds and singing vikings, but the typical Northern king or pirate was hardly a "lyrical" character; he was a sturdy, unflinching man of action. And so, when Jorund is made the hero of a lyrical tragedy we may expect at once a radical modification of historical facts. This is precisely what takes place. The Jorund of Sturleson is not a tragic hero at all, unless we consider his inherent craving for murder and plunder tragic. But this characteristic was common to any wide-range viking. Jorund is simply an ordinary sea-rover and king, who finally had the sad, though not "tragic," misfortune of being caught in his misdeeds. From a viking's viewpoint Jorund never knew any tragic guilt and the danger in which he lived was, undoubtedly, just what he wanted. The production as a whole is very much weakened by the infusion of an artificially created sentiment into the characters. They are not living individuals and are given no opportunity for dramatic development. There is too much singing and not enough

dialog, though what there is is good. Granberg makes Huggleik, Hake, and Jorund contemporaries in war; Starkad the Old has become both "bard" and foster-father of Jorund; Huggleik, instead of being slain, makes peace with Hake and has his eyes put out; Huggleik's daughter Hilda and her friend Yrsa, neither of whom is mentioned by Sturleson in this connection,<sup>1</sup> furnish material for the conventional love-scenes; and Starkad, as Granberg's instrument of fate, directs the show.

An appropriate name for the dramatic poem, according to Granberg's plan, would be "The Unavoidable Triumph of Jorund." It has now become a love story with love of woman and love of fatherland, where the hero cannot help but capture both. In the first act, Jorund, disguised as Halvar, is living an inactive life at Huggleik's court, enjoying the love of the weakling's daughter. But Jorund, as the son of Yngve, is destined to rule over Sweden, and so Starkad, in the hero's inactivity, employs the sea-king Hake to dethrone Huggleik and arouse the hero to action. According to the oracle, the ruling king, as in "Macbeth," must fall when the woods of Roslagen approach Uppsala. Messengers arrive from Hake; he demands Hilda and half of the kingdom and, upon receipt of the message that the oracle is being fulfilled, Huggleik loses courage and shuts himself up in his castle. Jorund now rushes forth and wishes to lead the warriors against the enemy.

From this point on the whole panorama could have been brought to a rapid close. Had Jorund been allowed to drive away the intruders he would have been the logical candidate for the throne, Hilda would have shared it with him, and the audience would have been ready at once for the triumphal postlude. But no! Starkad has promised Hake to reign one day, —a pleasure which is well deserved, to be sure,—and so, for the time being, he prevents the execution of the very thing he set out to accomplish and the panorama is extended for two acts more.

<sup>1</sup> Sturleson does give in Chapters 32-33 of the Ynglinga Saga the story of a foreign slave Yrsa who became queen in Sweden, but she was not the contemporary of Jorund. Sturleson does not mention any women at all in connection with the story of Jorund, but we are told (Chap. 29) that Jorund had a son Ane who became king after his father.

In the second act Jorund and his sweetheart are led around alternately by Starkad, Hilda being disguised as a soldier. Hilda must not reveal her identity to anyone until permitted to do so by Starkad. When she refuses to join the victorious Hake he is told that she has fallen in battle, whereupon Hake takes Yrsa and commands her to assume the name of Hilda, so that the people may believe that he is united in marriage to the Ynglinga race. Invisible beings are conjured up to arouse Jorund's jealousy by representing a union of Hake and Hilda. The shades of his ancestors pass in review and remind him of his duty to his fatherland. Deeply moved and in despair Jorund makes the resolution to suffocate his love and disperse the foe.

The last act deals further with Jorund's victory over Hake, sung by the bards. As a test of his sense of honor, the hero is given, and rather cleverly, the choice between the throne and Hilda. Of course, as in a French tragedy, honor and patriotism must come first,<sup>1</sup> but Jorund stands the trial and Hilda proves herself equal to the severe and dramatic test of love. Then honor and love are reconciled, her disguise is removed, Hake has retreated and as King of the North burns himself on a pyre of trophies upon his ship, and Jorund is now ready to receive the homage of the Swedish people.

Much could have been made of that dramatic meeting between Jorund and Hilda, III, 4, where the latter in soldier's garb is ready to die at the hand of her lover in order to be mourned by him, but all we have now is a brief and rather insipid quartett-song which, naturally, cannot begin to do justice to the situation. There are other scenes also with excellent dramatic possibilities, as, for instance, in II, 4, between Yrsa, Hake, and Starkad. But here, too, the dialog is too concentrated, events are told too abruptly, important decisions made too suddenly and without sufficient exposition of the inner struggles of the characters. The much desired dramatic concentration and viking

<sup>1</sup> Cf. I, 4, Hilda to Jorund:

Nej, Jorund, allt för äran våga  
om dina pligter fordra det;  
Din älskarinnas bild förgät,  
och för ditt rykte glöm din låga.

directness are carried to the extreme, and before we realize what is happening the action is over and someone begins to sing. Had Granberg called his poem a "bardiet," any adverse criticism of this sort would have been unwarranted, but as a "tragedy," without even a well defined tragic danger, it is, I think, vulnerable.

That the Fosforists had nothing good to say about Granberg's work,<sup>1</sup> was due, in part, to the fact that he leaned toward the Old School. Atterbom calls "Jorund" "a formless mass," and advises the author not to write another verse.<sup>2</sup> It is called a "tragedy," says Atterbom, because someone dies and called "lyrical" because a part is sung.<sup>3</sup> The manliness of the original is gone, there is monotony of rime,<sup>4</sup> and Atterbom asks whether the original fate of the hero would not seem more probable now after reading Granberg's description of him. But the rationalists did not have the same opinion—the Academy certainly did not—and as late as 1823 Martina v. Schwerin could speak of that "glimpse of talent," which was found in "Jorund."<sup>5</sup>

But something good may be said even of "Jorund." It has no well-developed local color, as we have seen, and the sprinkling of Norse mythology is little more than mere names, but, nevertheless, there is a tendency to depict viking scenes and characteristics. I have already made the observation that the Old Norse directness of speech is too well illustrated; fight, fire, fate, feast and song compose the fabric of the whole bardiet. The ancestors' fondness for riddles is illustrated in the first scene and the participation of women in battle and their utter disdain for danger and death are brought out in the first

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, Chap. I, pp. 44 and 63, concerning views of Hammarskjöld and Atterbom.

<sup>2</sup> *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for 1814 (Nos. 20-21), columns 326-27.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, column 315, and note.

<sup>4</sup> Atterbom believes that "dygder" and "bygder" must rime "certainly a million times" in Granberg's poetry.

<sup>5</sup> See letter to Tegnér of December 7, 1823. Esaias Tegnér's papper, p. 194. The occasion for the remark was the appearance of "The Death of Karl Knutsson" (Karl Knutssons död), a tragedy in three acts by Granberg which did not have "that glimpse of talent" displayed in "Jorund."

scene of Act II.<sup>1</sup> Of course we feel that there is no real danger that Granberg's women would either kill anybody else, or die themselves, but the traditional characteristic is at least indicated. To have one's body burned, as Hake does on his ship, was a common viking phenomenon, and the scene in I, 5, represents a council-place in the open air with its primitive judge's seat.

We find many phrases in "Jorund" which, though unnatural, are meant to be strong and to express a high degree of emotion; and the language is, of course, always polished and correct. Some lines, if taken by themselves, are really powerful and contain proverbial wisdom. The chief in I, 6, says:

"Den starke fordrar; blott den svage hoppas."<sup>2</sup>

The following patriotic and idealistic quotation has both good content and form. Starkad as bard is singing to Hagleik:

"När fordom en Konung blef hyllad i Norden  
han svor att bli värdig det välde han fått,  
och... trogen sitt löfte... vid gränsen af jorden  
han satte en gräns för sin ryktbarhet blott.

Ej mjuk var hans bädd och ej kräslig var födan,  
ej flockar af gycklare fyllde hans gård.  
Hans nöje var fejden, och... vunnen af mödan...  
hans hvila de sårade kämparnes vård."<sup>3</sup>

Granberg's "Jorund" is primarily non-Romantic. But, aside from the subject matter itself, there are other traces—possibly made unconsciously—of the new contemporary tendencies. Hilda (I, 4) is tormented by "a dreadful presenti-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. An äga vi de spjut, som våra mödrar burit,  
bevisom dessa män, som namn af kämpar fått,  
att våra fäders dygd, hvars dyrkan de besvurit,  
i arf till deras döttrar gått.

<sup>2</sup> The strong man demands; only the weakling hopes.

<sup>3</sup> Formerly, when homage was paid to a king in the North, he vowed to be worthy of the power he had received, and, loyal to his vow, set the limits of the world only as the limits for his fame. His bed was not soft, his food was not dainty, and flocks of jugglers did not fill his court. His joy was fighting and, won by toil, his rest was to care for wounded warriors.



ment" (en gruflig aning), as so many of the Romanticists themselves were. The scene in II, 6, is a typical Romantic scene. We have "a wild region between high mountains" and the whole illumined by the omnipresent moon. Hilda, as a warrior, is wandering about alone, aimlessly, as it were, directed by an unseen power, and in the greatest emotion:

"Hvart irra mina fjät? Till dessa vilda fjäll  
af hvilken okänd makt de föras!  
Allt är så ödsligt tyst! blott vilddjurs läten höras,  
besvarade af klippans häll."<sup>1</sup>

Then, too, the conjurations, the cloudiness, the thunder, the flames, the invisible choir, the night, and the procession upon passing clouds of ghosts of ancestral kings (in scenes 7 and 8 of Act II), produce the effect of a Romantic atmosphere. Even Hake in III, 1, is tormented by "a secret anxiety" (en hemlig oro). He fears nothing, but, like a Romantic dreamer, he does not know what the trouble is and cannot enjoy life. His royal power is great but even the gods cannot satisfy his thirsting soul. He longs for an inexpressible something which is far away, he knows not where:

"Jag vunnit hvad mitt hjerta eftersträfvat;  
men är jag nöjd? Ack nej, min vän!  
Den sällhets dröm, som för min tanke sväfvat,  
för mig är lika fjärran än."<sup>2</sup>

"Jorund" should be remembered for its historical importance, for three reasons: It was based on a saga, it was written by a rationalist, and appeared at the beginning of the Romantic period, when the Fosforists were conducting their attack upon the Academy and all its followers.

We now come to another poetic production which should be remembered for similar reasons. When Granberg was receiving official and ostentatious recognition for his work, the treat-

<sup>1</sup> Whither do my foot-steps go? By what unseen power directed to these wild mountains? Everything is so desolately quiet! Only the cry of wild beasts re-echoing from the cliff.

<sup>2</sup> I have won what my heart strove for; but am I satisfied? Oh, no, my friend! That dream of bliss which has hovered before my soul is still just as far away.

ment of another theme from Norse saga literature was just being completed. It was an epic poem in hexameters, based on Sturleson's mythico-historical *Gefion*, by the aristocratic but unassuming Eleonora Charlotta d'Albedyhll, née Wrangel (1770-1835). She was a rather independent poetess and neutral-minded, as far as close affiliation with any definite school was concerned. She inclined more, however, toward conservative views and kept up a lively correspondence with the Academician editor Wallmark. In the concluding note to her poem she gives her motive for writing and publishing her epic:

"This little attempt, with claim to nothing except the forgiveness of the reader, was written between 1810 and 1812 and was intended merely as a pastime for a few friends and for my own special pleasure. My opinion has been that to the epic belonged, essentially, that meter (i. e. the classical hexameter) which I have chosen; but that may possibly be a mistake which I hope will be kindly pardoned. Finally, it is as a result of my friends' encouragement, and at their request, that I have had this insignificant work printed. Love for poetry in general, and patriotism in particular, has induced me to write in meter, and to employ that interesting Norse mythology which is too little known and valued by us."

"*Gefion*, a Poem in Four Cantos," appeared finally in 1814, and was dedicated in glowing terms to the elected crown prince of Sweden. The brief dedication contains at once some important thoughts which later are developed in the epic itself and shows unbounded enthusiasm for the foreign-born prince. He is the peace-maker who will save the Northern iron from an everlasting blood-bath, he is the patron of agriculture, a "great man, born and bred in the luxuriant territory of the South." Then the poetess, with an assumed air of modesty and an implied enthusiasm for the South, pronounces her Northern poem "as destitute of flowers as the territory which produced the authoress."

"*Gefion*" is based on a part of the fifth chapter of the *Ynglinga Saga*. When the emigrating historical Odin had established himself, temporarily, in Germany, he dispatched the goddess of chastity, *Gefion*, northward to King *Gylfe* of Sweden,

"who presented her with a piece of tillable land. She then went to Jotunheim (the home of the giants) and had four sons by a giant; these she gave the form of oxen, hitched them to a plow, and dragged the land out into the sea and westwards towards Odinsö (Odin's isle, Fyen,) to a place which is now called Seeland; there she lived afterwards. She married Skjöld, the son of Odin; they lived in Lider (Leire). Where the plowed land lay, there is left water or sea which is called Lagen (Icl. *lögr*, the sea, now called Lake Mälär). The fjords in the Lagen correspond to the capes on Seeland."

In the epic this mythical-historical tale is greatly altered. The historical element, as such, disappears entirely and the whole is made purely mythical and allegorical.<sup>1</sup> Gefion has become a modern Ceres, as Atterbom has observed, and she comes directly from the home of the gods (Godheim) to the wild inhabitants of the North. She is now Odin's daughter and sister of Skjöld; appears in divine splendor in all Scandinavian countries, in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, in the order named; and has only three sons, Nore, Sverker, and Dan, symbolic of the three Scandinavian lands. She finally ascends to heaven in the presence of the settlers of Seeland at a place which later became Leijre, then Copenhagen, the seat of the Danish kings. Fru d'Albedyhll makes an historical assumption, also, the veracity of which is at least questionable. Gefion teaches a Norwegian, Thuler, the use of fire, and teaches Gylfe the art of plowing. This assumption would give Sweden a priority in agriculture which is wholly unwarranted.

The first canto of the epic deals with deliberations of the Norse gods in Asgård on the future welfare of Scandinavia. The problem is how to improve conditions in the "icy North" by teaching its inhabitants the better use of their fields and minerals. Gefion is sent down to earth to carry out this mission. In the second canto, the bow-man Thuler ascends the Dofre mountain in Norway, on the summit of which he intends to pray for food and strength. Gefion appears in a cloud and joins him, they descend the mountain together, and, at the foot

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the account of Atterbom's recension of "Gefion" above, in Chap. I, pp. 44ff. For the recension itself see "Literära karakteristiker," Örebro, 1870, pp. 115-35.

of the same, the trembling youth entertains his divine guest as best he can. Thereupon she calls forth fire from the earth, extracts iron from a stone near by, and teaches Thuler how to form it and use it. In "heavenly ecstasy" he embraces the goddess; Thuler's hut becomes a temple, and in the vision that follows he sees "three divine children," is told that the place upon which they stand is to be the future capital of Norway, and then the goddess disappears. In the third canto, Gefion comes to Gylfe in Sweden, where "the warriors lived on fish and game but lacked bread." The "majestic mermaid," with her "three small elves," arrives by water, and the arts of plowing, sowing, reaping, grinding, baking, and brewing are taught. Gefion spurns divinely Gylfe's offer of marriage, calls the land upon which she stands hers, changes her sons into oxen, and has the land pulled away. The poetess says: "Lake Lögaren (Mälar) still yearns for the hour when it may be re-united to the island." The last canto treats first of the deposition of the piece of land in the sea, then of the settling of this new island, and, lastly, of the ascension of Gefion to Asgård in the presence of the settlers.

A closer examination of the basic material in the epic discloses a very generous employment of Norse mythology in general. "Gefion" illustrates exceedingly well how deeply the Gothic tendency had become rooted outside Gothic circles, for, if we are to believe the statement of the authoress, the epic was begun before the Gothic Society was founded. Granberg's "Jorund" did not call for a very elaborate knowledge of Norse myths; it was based simply on an episode in an heroic saga and, judging from his tragedy, there is no evidence that Granberg went very deeply into the study of Norse antiquity. But with "Gefion" it is different. The whole framework shows a long step forward and reveals a tolerably complete knowledge of the Old Norse literature that was available in Sweden in 1810-1814. Both the Eddas and the *Heimskringla* are well known to the authoress, and we see in the appended notes that she knew what was being done in Denmark also in this line.<sup>1</sup> In the first canto especially all the important Norse divinities are

<sup>1</sup> Reference is made, for instance, to Baggesen's "*Poesiens oprindelse*."

introduced as well as some minor ones, their characteristics and dwelling-places indicated, and their environment and physical attributes described. This is done in part by brief and accurate explanatory notes at the end of the epic, and in part by expressions woven into the epic. References are made to episodes in the lives of the Scandinavian gods, such as Völa's prophecy of Balder's death, and the final fulfilment of it at the instigation of Loke. A reference to the favorite story of the origin of poetry, the story of Suttung's mead, as told in the *Tales of Brage* (*Bragaræður I*) finds a place in the first canto of "Gefion."

The whole epic of "Gefion," comprising forty pages, is a mixture of modernity, classicism, and a sublime, almost Christianized, heathenism. The home of the Asa-gods and their high-sounding deliberations would do honor to any divinities. They are idealized; they move on a high, etherial plane, and are either stripped entirely of all intrinsic crudeness, or their crudeness is artistically concealed. The human and objective gods are made more subjective, divine, and majestic, and Gefion ascends to heaven much as Christ did. The classical hexameter lends a certain questionable dignity to the poem, but there is hardly enough of it in this case to make it monotonous. There are many references to local political conditions; in fact, "Gefion" is a vehicle for the glorification of the royal house and the ancestry of the authoress.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, it is a vehicle for the exposition of Northern nature. Though the narrative itself is necessarily brief and concentrated, the descriptions, whether of nature or of characters, are comprehensive and highly colored. Fru d'Albedyhll has a well-developed sense of the picturesque. The Scandinavian flora, fish, fowl, minerals, and climate receive constant attention with a goodly coloring of azure, purple, silver, and gold. If we add to the above that the epic has a prophetic and a didactic element, and shows influence of the spirit of Rousseau and Montesquieu, we obtain some idea of the poetic conglomerate "Gefion."

The comparatively new idea that the history of a people must be studied in the light of its geographical environment is strik-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 63, for Hammar skjöld's criticism of "Gefion."

ingly illustrated in the fourth canto, ll. 60-65. Here the authoress touches briefly upon the topography and boundaries of the Scandinavian countries and indicates clearly their effect upon the character and political condition of the people. Denmark, for instance, is a level, fertile land; hence its inhabitants prefer "peaceful trades" and safety. But "the mountains of Norway and Sweden, on the other hand, have for a long time produced vikings. The temperament of a people is like that of the lands: one is protected by forests; the Baltic Sea (Eridanus) itself makes secure the freedom of the other."

Charlotta d'Albedyhll's conception of the viking age is characteristically Gothic. She implies that the modern era is corrupt by stating that the mythological age was incorrupt. It is the same Rousseauish spirit that permeated the minds of all the genuine Goths. The viking, to the authoress, was a god-fearing, reliable citizen, whose faith, though pagan, had not been shattered by rationalism. The present era is a "soulless clockwork," wisdom has vanished, and nature is dead. The sentiments of the poetess are lucidly expressed in the first canto (ll. 155-61). She is describing some results of the deliberations of the gods and this gives her occasion for a brief reflection:

Så rättvisan är stor och vördad i gudarnes samfund:  
Så höll Göthen sitt ord i de oförderfvade tider,  
Då Allfader ännu han trodde, och skydde ett Narstrond;  
Innan klyftiga vislingar, med nymodiga påfund,  
Bortförklarar det herrliga Allt till ett Intet, ett själlöst  
Urverk, dödat naturens lif, och visheten biltog  
Flytt från en jord, der låga begär med dess namn sig besmycka.<sup>1</sup>

We have stated that "Gefion" was allegorical. The three sons of the heavenly messenger Gefion represent the three Scandinavian countries. If we carry this symbolism a step

<sup>1</sup> Thus justice is revered in the society of the gods: thus the Goth kept his word in those incorrupt times when he still believed in Allfather and feared Narstrond (flood of sulphur in Muspelheim); before shrewd wiselings, with new-fashioned fancies, explaining away the glorious All to a Nothing, to a soulless clockwork, killed the life of Nature, and caused wisdom to be exiled from an earth where low desires adorn themselves with its name.

further, we detect beneath the surface of the mythological fabric the didactic and the prophetic element, and both are often closely intertwined. The didactic element consists now of general truths, as the authoress sees them, and now of special teachings, applicable to conditions in Scandinavia. For instance, Gefion says in the first canto (ll. 199-200):

"Obedience is the duty of woman on earth, in Asa-home also; the mildness of meekness is power, and patience the strength of weakness."

Now take a specific application. From the strictly Swedish viewpoint, the teaching of patriotism in "Gefion" appears to be cosmopolitan, paradoxical as that may seem. The poetess prefers to look at the whole North as a unity. It is not a narrow-minded patriotism for Sweden alone which is discernible through these hexameters; it is a broad-minded sympathy for all the Scandinavian countries. "Gefion" breathes an ardent hope for prosperity in Norway and Denmark as well as in Sweden, and its fundamental tone is a plea for love, unity, and peace throughout the North. Gefion was sent down to earth to bring "abundance, comfort, and industry" to the whole North. "May my song," says the poetess (canto I, ll. 11-12), "please the three-fold North, when I proclaim the three-fold power of Gefion in the poem." It is tolerably certain that the authoress has some form of a political union of the Scandinavian countries in mind, when she speaks in canto 4 of the three crowns in the coat-of-arms upon the "Northern shield."

The prophetic element in "Gefion" may be said to have three parts: pure invention for the glorification of the Swedish nobility, the foretelling of events which the poetess already at the time of writing knew to be historical facts, and the hopeful penetration into the future, i. e., after 1814. To illustrate the last two: iron is to become the treasure of the North, but the North does not realize its inestimable value; a prophecy, the fulfilment of which, during the last century, has proved of far greater consequence than the authoress could ever have imagined. But mark the didacticism again. This iron, "presented by Frigga to that righteous people who lived in woods and

upon the mountains," may not be discolored by human blood, lest rust corrode it. Well did Charlotta d'Albedyhll know that during the last centuries Scandinavian iron had often been stained by human blood. But, on the other hand, if we look ahead with the poetess upon the nineteenth century we see with satisfaction that her wish has been realized; for there has been no war in Sweden since "Gefion" was published, now just a century ago. We may well say that the original mission of Gefion, as described by Charlotta d'Albedyhll in ll. 191-96 of the first canto, has been satisfactorily fulfilled:

"Thules frusnade jord skall plöjas af idoga händer,  
 Fruktbara fält från höjderna ses och mognade skördar:  
 Jernet, Nordens klenod, ej alltid skall färgas af blodet,  
 Rosten i fåran det skall afslipa, och glänsa likt silfver;  
 Norden skall växa i makt, och trenne kronor den pryda:  
 Detta blifver ditt verk, o Gefion vänast bland döttrar!"<sup>1</sup>

A word more about the descriptive coloring, and the frequency with which it occurs. At times the descriptive words have an almost Romantic tinge. In the very first canto (l. 36) Freya flees to her team from her "rosy bed" (rosenbädd), even Frigga's sandals are gold (l. 56), her voice rings out like a "silver-tone" (silfverton, l. 65), and Gefion disappears like a "cloud of purple" (purpursky, l. 216). In the following canto the sky is a "beaming purple" (strålande purpur, l. 74), and the children of Gefion cling to their mother's skirt "with rounded hands of a lily-color" (rundade händer af liljfärg, l. 178). Again, in the third canto, the horizon is "striped with gold, azure and purple" (l. 50), the sons of Gefion are here "gold-beaming alike" (gullglänsande lika, l. 72), Gefion sweetens the brew for Gylfe with "honey-fragrant flowers" (honungsdoftande blommor, l. 126), and then the half intoxicated king looks upon the "blue-eyed goddess with a delirious yearning" (yrande trånad, l. 132). Forsete's palace

<sup>1</sup> The frozen earth of Thule (the North) shall be plowed by industrious hands. Fertile fields and ripe harvests are seen from the heights. Iron, the treasure of the North, shall not always be stained by blood; it shall scour off the rust in the furrow and it shall shine like silver. The North shall grow in power, and three crowns adorn it. Let this be your mission, Oh, Gefion, fairest of daughters!



in the last canto is, of course, gold and silver. Gefion's brother Skjöld has a purple cloak (l. 23), from the shoulders of Gefion's children there appear "gold-gleaming wings" (gullskimrande vingar, l. 136), upon the sky there flashes up a northern light, "blushing as the rose" (rosenrodnande, l. 171), and, finally (l. 187), we find a "silver-winged" (silfvervingad) shield. As an example of a rich coloring with a Fosseforistic phraseology, the following description of Freya is worth quoting:

Freya, bekransad och skön, från sin slända leende uppstod:  
Bar i hvar hand en svällande ros; en hvit i den högra,  
Och in den vensta en röd; på bröstet glimmade Brising,  
Höjande halsens bländande snö och rundningens svanglans;  
Kring gullsnörade fötterna lätt flög luftiga dräkten.<sup>1</sup>

The beautiful and detailed descriptions of Norse nature in "Gefion" constitute a very significant part of the epic. How true and realistic these are, and how disproportionately long in comparison with the total length of the poem, is seen in the following characteristic selection. It is a picture of the icy Dofre mountain in Norway, with its fowl and flora, and is inserted at the beginning of the second canto (II, 19-36):

Dofres väldiga fjäll, betäckt af snö och kristaller,  
Hvilka till massor höjts af vinterns långsamma stränghet,  
Började småningom re'n beskinas af värmande strålar.  
Väl, i gestalt af ett vattenfall, som i forssandet stelnat,  
Häftades isen ännu, bergfast, vid den hotande klippan;  
Men för solens eldiga blick gaf vika hans hårdhet.  
Droppvis göt han sig ned, förvandlad och tinad, till fjällets  
Vidt omgränsande fot, i djupet, och ökade bäcken,  
Som med möda sökte sig väg bland barren och skråf-is,  
Senaste höstens gulnade löf och splittrade grenar.  
Granens spetsiga topp sköt fram små fjällade förskott,  
Björkens hängande ris betyngdes af knoppar med brunröd

<sup>1</sup> Freya, crowned with a wreath and beautiful, arose from her distaff; carried in each hand a swelling rose; a white one in the right, and a red one in the left; upon her breast glimmered Brising (her neck-lace), heightening (the beauty of) the blinding snow of her neck and the swan-splendor of her bosom; around gold-laced feet flew lightly the airy garb. Canto I, ll. 81-84.

Färg, och förnadens nedarsta del man skådade grönska,  
 Då dess yttersta spets hoprullad hängde och torkad.  
 Af och an for gladan, och sträcker sin fläckiga vinge,  
 Orren spelande yfs och tjädern slår tungt ner på granen,  
 Breder en örnlik vinge så stolt, och hackar med näbben,  
 Ruskar hufvedet se'n, och slår flerfaldiga flocken.<sup>1</sup>

In so far as "Gefion" preserves the original saga material we may call it Romantic. Then, too, the love for brilliant coloring and an occasional turn of phrase reveals a certain sensitiveness to the new literary disturbances. But beyond this "Gefion" must be characterized, like "Jorund," as primarily non-Romantic. The choice of meter, the elevated tone, and the prevailing objectivity stamp the poem as a rationalistic product. The naïve charm of the primitive saga is suppressed entirely. The goddess, who is so human in the original myth, becomes enraged in a very rational way when Gylfe tries to embrace her, and, in revenge, she takes the piece of land by violence instead of being presented with it as a token of love and admiration. In other words, the motivation of the main action has become extremely selfish. It is motivated by a shallow, impulsive anger—the justification of which is at least very doubtful<sup>2</sup>—instead of by kindness and the unselfish desire of reward.

<sup>1</sup> The huge mountains of Dofre, covered with snow and crystals, which had been increased to masses by the persistent severity of the winter, began already, to be illumined gradually by warming sun-beams. To be sure, the ice, in the form of a waterfall which had solidified in the running, still clung tenaciously to the threatening cliff; but its hardness gave way to the fiery glance of the sun. Transformed and melted, it trickled down into the depths, drop by drop, to the far-extending foot (of the mountain), and swelled the brook which made its way with difficulty through the pine-needles and brittle ice, through the yellow leaves and splintered branches of the last autumn. The pointed top of the spruce pushed out scaly shoots, the hanging foliage of the white birch was made heavy by buds of a brownish-red color, and the lowest part of the twig began to show green, while its extreme point hung like a scroll and withered. The kite flies back and forth, and stretches its mottled wing; the black cock, playing, spreads his plumage; and the wood-grouse beats heavily down upon the spruce, spreads an eagle-like wing so proudly, pecks with his beak, shakes his head afterwards, and gives his characteristic, varied call.

<sup>2</sup> Tegnér doubted very much whether a human goddess would be so terribly offended at the king's intended caresses. The principal moment of

The authoress submitted her epic to Tegnér for criticism and his views are contained in a letter to her, dated July 15, 1813.<sup>1</sup> Tegnér omits purposely "what is beautiful in the poem" and devotes his attention to what he considers "less successful." He doubts the suitability of the hexameter for a Gothic theme;<sup>2</sup> the hexameter should be limited to translations from, and imitations of, the antique, such as Voss' "Luise" and Goethe's "Hermann und Dorothea." The hexameter is, after all, out of harmony with Old Norse content; it is, in this case, a "Roman tunic on a Northern goddess." For the Gothic languages the sagas and older German poems, for example, the "*Lied der Nibelungen*," furnish suitable verse-forms. The critic has another objection. For Gefion to give instruction in the art of brewing (canto 3) is unnecessary and out of place, he believes; it is out of harmony with the tone of the rest of the poem. The plan of the whole, also, lacks that well-rounded development and completeness which is a paramount merit. For instance, it is unnatural to think that any barbarian like Thuler should be ignorant of the use of fire. Again, nothing new takes place on Seeland, for Gefion really teaches agriculture in both Sweden and Denmark. Tegnér proposes the following plan: the exposition of the gradual development of the State in the North out of a condition of barbarism. This would involve three important stages: the age of hunting and fishing, the age of stock-raising, and the age of agriculture. The scenes of these three stages could be laid in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, respectively, and be depicted in three separate songs, much as the poetess had already done. The myth about the oxen would then be appropriate in the second canto. All this might not be absolutely correct, historically, but that would make little difference from a poetic viewpoint.

action thereby receives "an aspect of accidentality and chance," says Tegnér, "which can hardly be reconciled with the general laws of art. Because it seems to follow, that, if Gylfe had had a colder temperament and had been less intoxicated, Seeland would have been lying in Uppland (in Sweden) to this day." See letter to E. C. d'Abedyhll of July 5, 1813. In "*Skrifter*" *Jubelfestupplaga*, V, pp. 91-92. For whole letter see pp. 88-93.

<sup>1</sup> See preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> In "*Gefion*" the hexameter was not always perfect either and needed a thorough revision. Even in their final form some lines are difficult to read.

What effect these suggestions had upon the mind of the authoress we cannot tell. But the fact is that the epic appeared in its original form, with some verses revised, perhaps, and the plan remained unaltered. And so we must accept the epic as it stands, and for what it is worth. It is an interesting bit of readable poetic experimentation, with Old Norse content and classical form. Most of the hexameters are good, nothing is felt as commonplace, many passages are really beautiful, and the time of composition and publication gives the poem a certain historical value.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE THEORETICAL PROBLEM OF INTRODUCING NORSE MYTHOLOGY INTO SWEDISH ART AND POETRY

"Der griechischen Mythologie steht, wenigstens in romantischer Erhabenheit weit näher als die indische, die nordische, ein Reich voll Eispalläste, Eisseen, Eisberge; ihr Menschengeschlecht ein Eichenwald im Sturm."

Jean Paul Friedrich Richter: Review of Fouqué's  
"Sigurd der Schlangentödter."

What would have happened if "Frithiof's Saga" had appeared at the beginning of the Romantic period in Sweden instead of toward the end? Would it have deflected all the new tendencies into the national channel and destroyed the symbolic, philosophical movement? Would it have silenced neutral skepticism and conservative opposition to the anti-French system of literary expression? Nobody can tell with any degree of precision, but it is tolerably certain that, if a poet of Tegnér's caliber had treated some phase of Norse mythology at an earlier date, the objections to its use in art and poetry would have been much reduced, if not entirely eliminated. As it was, no one had been able to prove, in a practical, convincing way, that the indigenous sagas and myths had any real artistic value, and the mere fact that they were indigenous was not sufficient. The prejudice against anything new, whether national or not, was shamelessly strong and the burden of proof, naturally, lay with the reformers. Atterbom in his "Skaldarmal" could not expect any revolutionary success; as we have seen, it was a commendable and important poem, historically, but it was no phenomenal masterpiece and the author had already fallen into disrepute by his Fosforistic obscurantism and had a marked prejudice against him. His direct Norse influence on the Old School, therefore, could not be very effective. Geijer, whose national poems (on the viking, the

primitive farmer, the last warrior, and the last skald) had appeared in the first number of *Iduna*, was eulogized by Fossforists, neutrals, and conservatives alike, but he never employed Scandinavian myths, per se, at all, as a basis for his poetry. Geijer was too objective and had too keen an historical sense, it seems, to venture very far into an unexplored mythological field. Ling was the only man who took up the subject comprehensively, but he went to the other extreme, so that even the Goth Geijer became alarmed, and the beginning of Ling's gigantic epic, "The Asas" (Asarne), of which eight songs appeared in 1816, left the question of ultimate success a matter of conjecture.

It may, then, not seem so strange that, during the second decade especially, there continued to prevail a certain lukewarmness or skepticism about the adaptability of Norse mythology to poetic themes, even among some members of the New School. Natural disasters, such as the loss of Finland, were equally unable to create a general, unalloyed faith in national myths, and the problem of their suitability for the plastic arts was a still more serious matter. The main results of this agitation were a series of lectures on Norse mythology and art by Ling, a treatise on the adaptability of the new myths to plastic art by Geijer, a parody and a satire on the Gothic tendencies in art by the disciples of the Old School, and some light, inoffensive satire by Vitalis.

Sweden was not the only country to sound, by theoretical means, the practicability of introducing Norse divinities into art. Both Germany and Denmark preceded Sweden in this respect. But wherever the problem is agitated the method of approach is the same, namely to compare the new mythology with other poetic systems, using Greek mythology as a standard.

Herder adopts this method and in his "Iduna, oder der Apfel der Verjüngung," he expresses in dialog form his own views on the subject. Norse mythology may not be adopted in art or poetry at the expense of the Greek, which is the most refined in the world, and, moreover, plastic art and a philosophy of art never thrived (war nie zu Hause) under a Northern sky.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sämmtliche Werke* (Suphan edition), Vol. 18, p. 501. All references are to this edition.

That all the Germans were not of the same opinion, however, is seen in Herder's second treatise on Norse mythology, "Zutritt der nordischen Mythologie zur neueren Dichtkunst." After speaking of the work of Klopstock and Gerstenberg on Northern themes, he adds: "Soon there arose a party who not only placed this (Norse) mythology above the Greek, but in comparison with the former almost ridiculed the latter."<sup>1</sup> In 1807 Gräter publicly suggested the employment of Norse myths in art, but the continental wars temporarily frustrated his plans. His letters on the subject, however, appeared in Danish translation in Copenhagen in 1821.<sup>2</sup> From 1812-1816, in *Idunna und Hermode*, Gräter proposed to furnish a series of copper engravings on characters and scenes in Norse mythology to serve as a guide for students in plastic art.<sup>3</sup> Gräter received much encouragement in his proposals from other German and Danish authors.

In Denmark the a priori reasoning for and against the recognition of the Norse myths in art or poetry was unusually violent and raged for several years. There were two factions: one pleaded sensibly for an appropriate use of the national myth, and the other sought to disqualify it entirely. There was no attempt on the part of the radicals, however, as far as I know, to discredit the Greek mythology by ridicule, as Herder tells us was the case in Germany, or as Romanticists were forced to do in Sweden. The history of this controversy is well known, especially in Scandinavia, and I need only refer here to an important aspect and conclusion for the sake of its bearing on the controversy in Sweden.

In 1800 the University of Copenhagen submitted the following questions for consideration. "Would it be beneficial for the polite literature of the North if the ancient Northern mythology were introduced and accepted in place of the Greek?"<sup>4</sup> Three young enthusiasts responded by written treatises, Oehlenschläger, J. Möller, and L. L. Platou, all of whom later became

<sup>1</sup> Werke: 24, p. 312. Cf. above, Chap. I, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hjærne: *Götiska förbundet*, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Blanck: *Den nordiska renässansen*, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Arentzen: *Baggesen og Oehlenschläger*, I, p. 197ff.

professors. Oehlenschläger, whose paper received an *accessit* from the university, found a wealth of epic material in the Norse myths and believed that the older the period from which the poet took his material the better it was for him.<sup>1</sup> The Northern myths were neither unfruitful (*fattig*) nor coarse (*raa*) and all the competitors agreed that Scandinavian mythology might well be introduced into art, though not at the expense of the Greek or Roman.<sup>2</sup> This view is substantially the same, then, as that of Herder. In the interim, the battle in Denmark was constantly growing in intensity. In 1812 Möller published an article on the adaptability of the Norse myth to the fine arts. As an extreme type of the conservatives we may mention the Danish professor Thorkel Baden. Baden believed, as did the German Schlözer,<sup>3</sup> that the Edda was nothing but an invention of Christian monks and not a collection of original, ancient poetry.<sup>4</sup> Professor Baden doubted whether the Norse myths had ever been a living belief of a people or that they could be employed successfully in art.

Just as the Romanticists in Sweden sought to establish an independent, national poetry, they (and more especially the "Goths") sought also to pave the way for an original, national school of art, based on Norse mythology. It was a determined assault upon the old ramparts, even in this case, with no respect for law or authority. But to the ultra-conservatives, who stripped the characters of the new myths of all human traits and ignored their position in the more historical saga, the resuscitated divinities became formless monsters. And then the exposed gods were submitted, from the beginning, to the same searching test as in other countries, that is, to a comparison with the idealized classical divinities. The fact that the new gods were Norse, as I have just said, was of little consequence to the skeptical mind; patriotism did not serve to render a lenient verdict and the old academic school of art insisted upon an exclusively classical *raison d'être*.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably August Ludwig v. Schlözer (1735-1809). He published "*Allgemeine nordische Geschichte*," Halle, 1772, 2Bde.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hjärne: as above, p. 63. Ling replies to this contention in his "*Sinnebildslära*."



As early as 1798 A. E. Afzelius expressed the conviction that Norse mythology was better suited for Swedish customs than the myths of Greece and Rome.<sup>1</sup> But in 1811 the Academic organ, *Journal för Litteraturen och Theatern*, edited by Wallmark, takes a different stand. In a review of the first number of *Iduna*,<sup>2</sup> the reviewer laments, indeed, the frigid attitude toward "our ancient monuments and history," and on the whole, gives a favorable criticism of the new periodical, but reveals a slight preference for classical mythology. The Norse myths deserve to be known and used both from an historical and esthetic standpoint, but they cannot replace the Greek or Roman.<sup>3</sup> We have, then, from the first, as in Denmark and Germany, two opposite tendencies, although, as we shall see, no important Swedish critic of art existed, whether Goth, neutral, or Academician, who ever expected or intended actually to replace the Greek system.

From 1799 to 1804 Per Henrik Ling studied in Copenhagen. He attended the private gymnastic institute of Franz Nachtigall, plunged into grammars and dictionaries at the Royal Library, and became acquainted with the works of Ewald, Baggesen, and the young Oehlenschläger. He learned to know the ancient Northern literature and culture, which began at once to have a tremendous effect on the future epic poet and teacher of gymnastics. From 1802 to 1804 Ling attended the lectures of Henrik Steffens, who sought to interpret the deep meaning of the golden, mythological age; an age when the universe itself was looked upon as a spiritual organism, "when sacred sagas interpreted the future history of the earth, and profound symbols (myths) reflected the metamorphoses of nature."<sup>4</sup> It was an age of harmony, plastic art, and epic poetry. Ling returned to Sweden in 1804, became teacher of fencing at Lund the following spring, and soon after that began to formulate plans for a wholesale introduction of Norse mythology and saga into Swedish poetry and art.

<sup>1</sup> See above: Introduction, p. 24. Cf. also Blanck: *Den nordiska rennässansen*, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers 195-98.

<sup>3</sup> No. 198.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Westerblad: P. H. Ling, p. 17. Contents from Steffens: *Inledning til filosofiske forelæsninger*. Kjöb., 1803.

From a letter by Carl Adolf Agardh to Hammarskjöld, dated August 6, 1810,<sup>1</sup> we learn that the latter was engaged in writing a sort of history of Swedish art for Ling's benefit. Evidently Ling had already in mind something like his future lectures on the use of Scandinavian mythology in art, and desired to obtain a characterization of the most important Swedish artists up to that time. Ling asked Agardh to thank Hammarskjöld "a thousand fold" and to write him not to trouble himself about the less important geniuses. In the spring of 1814, however, Hammarskjöld himself made public use of his material and delivered fifteen lectures in Stockholm upon the history of art. They were repeated in the spring of the following year. They have no particular significance for us, for most of the lectures dealt with foreign artists,<sup>2</sup> and only the last lecture was devoted to Swedish art. Yet Hammarskjöld should be remembered as a pioneer in this field, and as a Fosforist unknowingly helping a Goth of the most extreme type to prepare the way for new motifs and a national art. Hammarskjöld's lectures were published later and reviewed in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning*, 1818.<sup>3</sup>

No one was more ardent to introduce the new mythology than Ling, and from 1814 to 1817 he delivered in Stockholm, under the auspices of the newly organized "Society for the Study of Art," his meritorious lectures on the "Employment of Norse Myths in Fine Art."<sup>4</sup> Ling had already tested, or was testing, the new saga element both in epic and dramatic form;<sup>5</sup> he looked to Norse paganism for his ideal; the power, the depth,

<sup>1</sup> Frunck: *Bref rörande den nya skolans historia*, II, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Oriental, Greek, Roman, Italian, Flemish, German, Spanish, English, and Danish.

<sup>3</sup> "De bildande konsternas historia," reviewed in numbers 8, 9, 12 and 13. Hammarskjöld is criticized here for haste and serious mistakes. Judging from the above mentioned letter by Agardh to Hammarskjöld, we must conclude that Hammarskjöld attempted to cover the field too minutely, found the task more difficult than he expected for the time he had at his disposal, and so failed to grasp all the fundamentals.

<sup>4</sup> The lectures were first given in a hall at the Institute of Gymnastics and then, in 1816, in the so-called "lilla Beursalen." Cf. Westerblad: *Ling*, p. 81, and note 3.

<sup>5</sup> The first draft of the epic "Gylfe" appeared in 1810, the tragedy "Agne" in 1812, the historical tragedy "Eyolf den Göthiske," of early conception, 1814.

and the grandeur of the native mythology appealed to him with an irresistible force. In patriotic spirit and love for Swedish antiquity he was a Rudbeckian; in practice, a religiously devout student of all Norse mythology. The science of gymnastics gave him an insight into the harmony of the human body, and he now yearned to see his ideal type personified in art in terms of Odin, Thor, or Frigga. J. Adlerbeth writes to Tegnér from Stockholm, the 11th of April, 1815:<sup>1</sup> "From the end of January to Easter, Ling lectured here on Norse mythology to a very large audience," and Adlerbeth, who attended the lectures, characterizes them as being of "really great merit."

A complete record of Ling's original lectures has never been found, but a good general idea of their contents and value may be obtained from Ling's "Symbolism of the Eddas" (*Ed-dornas sinnebildslära*) published in 1819.<sup>2</sup> According to Ling himself<sup>3</sup> this work was to consist, ultimately, of four parts and the last was to contain a mythological dictionary and a supplement for the guidance of painters and sculptors. Only the first part ever appeared complete in print, however, and only detached parts of the supplement (*Bihang*) for artists. But the introduction to the first part and what remains of the supplement are sufficient for our purpose.

Ling uses the comparative method like Herder and Oehlen-schläger. With some historical sense he shows how the geographical location and climate turned the Old Norse method of artistic expression into lyric form rather than into painting or sculpture, as was possible in Greece. Ling does not expect, any more than his predecessors, that the Northern myths will expel the Southern;<sup>4</sup> but they were from the beginning incor-

<sup>1</sup> Esaias Tegnér's papper, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Ling's theoretical views on Norse myths are scattered all through his works and often specifically stated in his elaborate notes to his *Asa*-epic. From these the contents of his lectures can easily be synthesized. We possess a few of Adlerbeth's notes on Ling's lectures, but, apparently, they cover only a period of about a week, from the thirteenth to the twenty-second of November, 1816. Cf. *Westerblad: Ling*, p. 83, and note 2. The "*Sinnebildslära*" is favorably reviewed in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for 1820, Nos. 35-36.

<sup>3</sup> See *Samlade arbeten*, II, pp. 332-33. References are to this work.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

porated with the skaldic tongue of his forefathers and should therefore be revived. Both Greek and Norse myths contain poetic creations which it would be difficult to represent faithfully in plastic art.<sup>1</sup> The *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*, as well as the sagas, contain monsters. Giants with dragons' tails, centaurs, satyrs, or cyclopes are as little adapted for the chisel as "our formless trolls." Our Norse ancestors never offended the law of beauty but no artist sought to perfect it.<sup>2</sup> The Greek has a larger number of "beautiful symbols" from social life and sensual pleasure, but the Norse far outstrips the former in the number of those with moral and religious attributes.<sup>3</sup> The Norse myth is serious, gloomy, and mysterious; that of the Greek mild and charming.<sup>4</sup>

Ling's "Edda-Symbolism," as the name implies, bears an unmistakable Romantic stamp. He revels in the Norse myths like a child in a fairy-story. To grasp their full meaning one must reflect upon these myths with the fervency of a child.<sup>5</sup> The language and spirit throughout is that of a *Stürmer-und-Dränger* who is determined to make his point. Flashes of genius, forceful expressions, and a wonderful acuteness in his arguments, give his plea a logical and convincing character. In many respects his method and patriotism remind one of Heinrich von Kleist. Kleist had no sympathy for the *Rheinbund*, whose members he considered traitors to the fatherland; similarly, the *Asa*-bard becomes almost fanatic in his assertions about his countrymen's indifference to national material. That citizen who is "cold to native traditions and doubts the possibility of restoring his country's honor, is already in danger of becoming a traitor to his fatherland."<sup>6</sup> "The cosmopolitan is the most lukewarm and weakest of all beings."<sup>7</sup> It ought to be the duty of every mother not to make her offspring an "ape," that is an imitator of foreigners.<sup>8</sup> The Norse myths are the beginning of Scandinavian history and the great personalities in its sagas represent the "Urbild" of the nation's power.

<sup>1</sup> P. 325.

<sup>2</sup> P. 325.

<sup>3</sup> P. 327.

<sup>4</sup> P. 322.

<sup>5</sup> P. 331.

<sup>6</sup> P. 330.

<sup>7</sup> P. 329.

<sup>8</sup> P. 330.

More than that, the Norse myths contain the very fundamental germs (*grundfrön*) of a revealed religion and every one of its "pagan thinkers" felt (anade) the "eternal truths of Revelation."<sup>1</sup> Symbols—and Ling means those in the Edda especially—are the real language of religion, and the myths represent our ancestors' crude investigations in religion and philosophy. The Romantic art of poetry is a true, inherent element of the Norse myths. The Scandinavian gods and goddesses are nature-symbols<sup>2</sup>—observe the influence of the Romantic nature-philosophy—in no wise antagonistic to Christianity, and may therefore be employed with propriety by artists of Christian faith. Rousseauism also plays a part in Ling's interpretation of the Edda-myths. The myths of a people become "broadened, or more correctly speaking corrupted, the more the number of its poets and the political power of the people increase; for then this religious, philosophical art of poetry assumes a more historical character, and actual events expel, to a large degree, the meaning of the symbols which its thinkers and skalds have introduced."<sup>3</sup>

The fragmentary supplement for artists, as printed, contains but 34 pages,<sup>4</sup> including four on Old Norse dress and armor. It is a careful compilation of the mental and physical characteristics of the various Scandinavian divinities, with their important attributes, all based on the Edda. Naturally much attention is paid to facial expression as a mirror of character, dignity, and office. Many of Ling's suggestions are to be taken merely as suggestions; originality is of paramount significance in art and the details of the execution, therefore, are left to the discretion of the artist.<sup>5</sup> As much as possible the artist should avoid all direct imitation of the Southerners,<sup>6</sup> yet Ling himself borrows suggestions from Greek masters.<sup>7</sup> He recognizes that

<sup>1</sup> P. 331.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 324-25.

<sup>3</sup> P. 326.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 441-74, inclusive.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. p. 457, suggestions relating to the goddess Sif. Also p. 450, relating to Brage, and p. 459, to Freja.

<sup>6</sup> P. 458.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. p. 457, where Ling suggests a definite style of hair for each of the goddesses, "as the former Greek masters had adopted for the Greek divinities."

the problems confronting the painter and the sculptor are different; a fish-net as an attribute of Ran can easily be represented by the former but hardly by the latter.<sup>1</sup> Ling admits that an eight-legged horse like Odin's Sleipner can "scarcely" be represented as standing by the side of Hermod.<sup>2</sup> It must be admitted that Ling shows a decided preference for Norse mythology, even if he never intended to drive out other poetic systems.<sup>3</sup> Our Scandinavian ancestors, according to Ling, had a "positive" and "pure" feeling for the beautiful. Not in one single instance (i. e. as evidenced in the sources) did they forget the laws of beauty. "Their divinities are all represented according to the most perfect form, i. e., the human form; they have never, like the Egyptians, Hindus, Chinese, or even the Greeks in the beginning, represented their gods in the shape of multiplex beasts, with manifold arms, heads, eyes, etc.; and they have never even permitted themselves to represent the god of evil, Loke, in any more horrible manner than the other gods or goddesses."<sup>4</sup> Only that which belonged exclusively to the lower world, such as the children of Loke, was represented as horrible, and its giants and trolls were made monstrous, because they belonged to "formless nature." The highest god or Allfather was never conceived by "our ancestors" in sensual form and, therefore, "cannot be represented by the artist in connection with the Eddaic nature-divinities."<sup>5</sup>

A couple of concrete examples from the supplement will illustrate Ling's suggestions for painters and sculptors. Brage, the god of mead and poetry, should be a "middle-aged man with long beard; for he is called 'the long-beard.'" "His face should express wisdom and feeling, but not bravery or courage. Let his mouth be ready to speak." He possessed a horse and a sword, but it is desirable that his sword (the symbol of satire)

<sup>1</sup> P. 461.

<sup>2</sup> P. 452.

<sup>3</sup> Lydia Wahlström in "Den svenska odlingens stormän," V, p. 80, calls Ling's preference for Norse myths "tremendous" (ofantlig), and bases her claim on Ling's comparative estimates of the Greek and Norse myths, as viewed from an ethical and religious standpoint.

<sup>4</sup> Ling: *Samlade arbeten*, II, pp. 443-44.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. p. 446.

be placed at his feet. In one hand he should hold the Brage-cup and rest the other on his harp, "which should be larger than the one given Apollo, and not constructed in the same way." "From the sagas we know that these instruments were so large that even children could be concealed in them." This form, too, could hardly be suitable for Brage and the artist himself should select a suitable one. Brage should be draped, but without a helmet.<sup>1</sup> "Nanna, the wife of Balder, ought to be represented as clothed. The left breast ought to be more exposed perhaps, and maybe her hand placed over it, provided this does not give her a super-theatrical aspect. The myth says: 'her heart broke.' I presume that the artist ought to direct his attention to her as the goddess of tender affection (*Ömhetens gudinna*). Her face should be young, beautiful, but suffering; and her mouth as if smiling beneath her pain. About her waist she should have the girdle which was burned with her; and on her finger the golden ornament which she sent to Frigga from Hel."<sup>2</sup>

The lectures by Ling had an immediate and "particularly encouraging" result, the more so because the lecturer associated with several young artists, some of whom lived in the same house that sheltered his gymnastic institute.<sup>3</sup> Of these Bengt Erland Fogelberg, the sculptor, was an actual pupil of Ling<sup>4</sup> and was directly influenced by him. In the spring of 1817 an anonymous donor (now known to be the envoyé Baron G. U. Silfverhjelm), an attendant upon Ling's lectures, gave the sum of 50 ducats to the Gothic Society as prize for either a Swedish or Norwegian artist who should draw and develop some motif from Norse mythology, either in architecture, sculpture, design, or painting. This offer was discussed by the Society on the 10th of June, 1817, and competitors for this prize were advised by the Society to study the Eddas diligently, both the poetic and prose Eddas, as being "the richest and most reliable

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 450, for Brage.

<sup>2</sup> P. 456.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wahlström: *Den svenska odlingens stormän*, V, p. 83. Westerblad (Ling, p. 82) mentions Fogelberg, Sandberg, and Wahlbom who lived in the same house that sheltered the Institute.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, p. 55.

source of information about the Norse myths."<sup>1</sup> Prespective competitors were recommended also to study Ling's "Gylfe" and "The Asas"<sup>2</sup> for inspiration and ideas.<sup>3</sup> Themes were suggested by the Society for various branches of art, viz.: for plastic art: the supreme Odin on his throne Lidskalf looking down upon the world and seeing all that takes place; or Thor riding in his chariot, fighting the giants. Someone suggested as a theme for architecture, Valhalla, the dwelling place of Odin and the heroes fallen in battle. As Ling had advocated in his supplement, the artists were allowed a great deal of freedom, for, above all, independence was desired. The announcement of this competition was printed in *Inrikes Tidningar*, June 18, 1817,<sup>4</sup> and several candidates responded,<sup>5</sup> among them Fogelberg. According to contemporary evidence, Hjalmar Mörner, who had just been reading Ling's poetry, was called upon to decorate the salon of one Rosendal, and chose to picture the entry of Odin and his Asas into Scandinavia.<sup>6</sup> As late as 1850, when Bernh. von Beskow, himself a former student of painting, wrote his biography of Ling, artists, in response to a demand for competitive work from "Gothic" mythology, "probably," received more ideas from the poetry of the Asa-bard than from any other poet. Because no one portrayed "these antique images so

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 55ff.

<sup>2</sup> In the edition of 1814, the political allegory "Gylfe" in Norse dress contained fifteen songs. It will be remembered that eight songs of "The Asas" had appeared in 1816. Cf. above, p. 99; also note 2, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hjärne, *Götiska förbundet*, p. 149.

<sup>4</sup> Printed in Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, pp. 146-49.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Wahlström: Ling, p. 83.

<sup>6</sup> Bernh. v. Beskow: Life of Ling in Vol. I of Ling's *Samlade arbeten*, dated in Stockholm, April 22, 1859. Cf. p. xxiv. Beskow on this page mentions the names of several artists who were influenced by Ling. Beskow was 21 years old in 1817 and was wide-awake to all contemporary affairs. Cf. note on Beskow in Appendix. Hj. Mörner was admitted into the Gothic Society February 16, 1829, and instead of "within three months" giving a speech on his Gothic namesake, as others were supposed to do, he submitted eleven sketches representing myths about Odin, and about the coming and settling of the Asas in Sweden. Cf. Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, p. 18. Nicander says of Hjalmar Mörner:

"Din samtid kunde ej Ditt snille kröna . . .

Hvad gör det? Konstens mål du hunnit har;"

Cf. Nicander: *Samlade arbeten*, Tredje upplagan. Förra delen, p. 479.



completely, with such true conviction, and such pious childlike faith as he."<sup>1</sup>

But Ling's offensive and defensive tributes to the newly revived divinities did not meet with the same approval everywhere; in fact, the general attitude was probably against him. His efforts met with an enthusiastic welcome by the new "Society for the Study of Art" (Sällskap för konststudium) which took up the cause of Gothism as against classicism. But the Praeses of the old "Academy of Free Arts" (Fria Konsternas Akademi) had publicly condemned the new subjects in the province of art as being "coarse" and "monstrous products of the most ancient northern peoples' imagination." Only those who attended Ling's lectures really knew their sensible contents, for they did not appear in print until two years later. Others judged Ling entirely by his poetic creations, which showed a marked tendency to exaggeration. Consequently, there arose a feeling of apprehension, lest the influence of the dangerous Goth might fill the Swedish studios with Norse monstrosities. The classicists were reminded with horror of the Rudbeckian age when Scandinavian antiquity became the object of ridicule, and before the decade was over it became, for the second time, the target for warning and satire. What was the character of these warnings and satires?

On November 8, 1817, there appeared in *Linköpingsbladet* a rather harmless but witty and amusing parody<sup>2</sup> on the announcement for the Norse prize competition. Here is an example from a suggestion for architecture: The Dwelling of the Blessed with Odin in Valhalla:

"In Odin's chamber there must be his throne, benches around the walls for the Blessed, the fire-place in the middle of the room, and nearby a place where the Blessed at meals may cast the bones after they have gnawed off the meat. Outhouses and especially larders and cellars, must be large enough and the ale-brewery spacious. A place must be marked out where the heroes may exercise."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Beskow: *Life of Ling*, as above, p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, pp. 149-52.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 149-50.

The parody suggests as a theme for sculptors: Ragnar Lodbrok in the serpents' den,<sup>1</sup> and contains an extremely clever and effectively developed comparison with the famous Laocoön-group. The comparative method, then, had even crept into the field of ridicule, a method which was adopted later in the more biting and triumphant satire of the *Academician Journal*.

An interesting and important phase of the outsider's conception of the New School is brought out in one part of this parody. It shows that the characteristics of both the new tendencies were considered present, to a greater or less degree, in one of these literary factions; that is, that the difference between a Goth and a Fosforist was merely relative. This parody, directed primarily against the Goths, becomes a satire on the whole Romantic group, and especially on that phase of it which is attributed to the Fosforists. The part referred to is a satire on a so-called "historical painting."<sup>2</sup> The title and introduction may remind the reader of Franz Sternbald reproducing music on his canvas:

St. David hangs his mittens on the sunbeams. "Painting as an art has its origin in Christianity; it is at the same time a Romantic art. Therefore the theme for its exposition may not be taken from ordinary life. The world of heroes is not musical enough for it; its subjects are to be sought where a pious faith elevates the observer from the world of reality to the world of imagination and ravishingly snatches him from the insipidly possible to the forboded supernatural."

then follows a witty attack on Fosforistic pot-pourris of color, mysticism, harmony, "innerlighet," obscurity in style and language, and all intended for the Goths.

In connection with the problem of art and parodies or satires on the same, we are able to corroborate a conclusion in Chapter I, that the Fosforists had distinct Gothic tendencies. One proof of this is Vitalis's ridicule of the Fosforists, in the third decade, which includes some pleasant and inoffensive but keen satire on their fondness for Norse antiquity. It is a parallel

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that Ragnar Lodbrok was put to death by vipers while on an expedition to Northumberland, England, about 794.

<sup>2</sup> Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, pp. 150-51.

of the case presented in the preceding paragraph, but in this instance the target is Fosforism, and Gothism is included in it. Vitalis's humorous polemic against the New School was called "The Fosforists in Olympia." It was never completed and is now lost. The fragment, however, was finally published in *Östgöta Correspondenten*, for 1839, by Henrik Palmaer, who knew Vitalis's plans. For our account we are indebted to Forselius,<sup>1</sup> a friend of Atterbom and Palmblad. It appears that the original plan was in dramatic form and was to contain 15 acts, for "all the foolishness of the Fosforists could not be included in 5 acts." In the second act Queen Edda appears. "The magic Brynhild form" aspires to Amadis's (Atterbom's) love, but Eos-Sophia (German philosophy) comes forth, shows a copy of *Fosforos*, and pretends that she alone has the legitimate claim to this honor.<sup>2</sup> A mortal combat ensues between the two goddesses. Eos-Sophia is pierced by the lance of Edda, but the latter is also wounded and dies, being afterward christened in a wept sonnet. In the fifth act Bacchus and Apollo are conversing on the walls of Olympus. Bacchus asks: "What sort of gnats are those I see coming?" "Those are not gnats," answers Apollo, "those are Fosforists," and interprets the assumed humming of the gnats to be the singing of the Fosforists. As the latter approach a few words can be distinguished such as "ancient groves," "viking-seats," etc.

Even in his poetry Vitalis liked to poke fun at the characters in Norse mythology and those interested in the viking age. In his collected works we find two poems in rimed couplets, dated 1824, called "The Rune Frey" and "The Rune Naud," respectively,<sup>3</sup> their titles being intended to ridicule Nicander's plan of publishing an *édition de luxe* of his cycle of poems

<sup>1</sup> See Forselius: Introduction to Vitalis's *Samlade skrifter*. Stockholm, 1873, pp. liiff.

<sup>2</sup> It may be Vitalis's opinion that Atterbom's fondness for Norse antiquity was merely a *prédilection d'artiste*, and we have to admit, of course, that German models were uppermost in his mind, yet Vitalis's proposed comedy presupposes some sort of an interest in the Norse myths.

<sup>3</sup> *Runan Frey*. *Fornforskaren*. Printed in *Samlade skrifter*, pp. 231ff. *Runan Naud*. *Nordens gudar*. Printed in *Samlade skrifter*, pp. 234ff.

called "The Runes."<sup>1</sup> "The Rune Frey" had a sub-title, "The Antiquarian" (p. 112, note 3), and satirized the Gothic tendencies to dig into every mound or "mole-hill," and then if you found anything to describe your discovery in *Iduna*. The antiquarian in this poem sees a number of stones standing in a row; to him they immediately become remnants of ancient viking judgment-seats (*domarestenar*); a hoary man with "silvery hair" appears who represents the spirit of bygone days and is questioned boldly and solemnly concerning these stones. The expectant interlocutor gets the following prosaic reply from the old man:

Min gunstige herre!  
På denna plats, i min ungdoms dar,  
En liten badstuga uppbyggd var.<sup>2</sup>

Although "The Rune Naud," per se, has no more connection with art than "The Rune Frey," the contents do strike nearer home and are aimed directly at the old Norse gods and their introduction into poetry. Incidentally, Vitalis himself betrays at least a superficial knowledge of the mythology he attempts to ridicule, even if he proudly confesses ignorance about some of the minor divinities.<sup>3</sup> Vitalis amuses himself in this poem—and others as well—by comparing his own private affairs to those of the Scandinavian gods. Brage had a wife, but he (Vitalis) has none; yet he is glad that he has no gold in his mouth like Heimdall, for then his creditors would come with a

<sup>1</sup> Nicander wrote a series of sixteen poems of a national character and at the head of each poem he had some rune inscribed. He planned a vain edition of his "Runes" in his own handwriting with a picture of himself in student's uniform inserted under the rune "Naud," which has as title "Norna-Gest as Youth" (*Norna-Gest Som Yngling*). Cf. Nicander: *Samlade arbeten*, Stockholm, 1862, Vol. I, p. 212. Vitalis, who believed his friend had "lost his mind," writes April 3, 1824, that if Nicander's book appeared he would write and inscribe sixteen runes with sixteen caricatures, including his own portrait as "youth with night-cap and poetic coat." See Introduction to Vitalis's works by Forselius, pp. xliiff. Nicander's edition of 1825, though an *édition de luxe*, did not have the author's picture and Vitalis's plan also stranded. The only "runes" he inscribed were the two mentioned above. Cf. Chap. V.

<sup>2</sup> "My dear sir, upon this spot, in my younger days, there used to stand a little bath-house."

<sup>3</sup> As for example: Ali, Voli, Uller, or Forsete.

surgeon and tear them out. The exact nature of Vitalis's light satire on the Norse gods is best illustrated by examples. I have selected the first, second, and seventh stanzas.

I fall det roar edar, ja och i annat fall,  
Jag alla gamla Asar för er uppräknat skall.  
De upp ur grafven komma, med buller och med bång,  
Allt för att figurera uti de Göters sång.

Bland dem är Oden ypperst; han blott ett öga bär;  
På källarn Urdarbrunnen det andra pantsatt är.  
Slarfaktig i affärer är visst den Ase bälld,  
Han eljest långt för detta löst det ur Mimers våld.

Och blåstens gud är Niord, som skjildes vid sin fru,  
Kanske han ännu lefver; nog blåser det ännu,  
Den guden hade fötter så vackra och så små.  
Hur han såg ut i synen, har jag ej reda på.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "In case it amuses you, yes, even if it does not, I shall enumerate all the Asas for you. They come up out of their graves with noise and bluster, just to figure in the songs of the Goths." "Among them Odin is the most important; he possesses only one eye: the other one is pawned in the tavern Urdarbrunnen (the fountain of time). The bold Asa must be careless in business otherwise he would have redeemed it long ago from the power of Mimer." "And the god of wind is Niord who was separated from his wife. Perhaps he is still alive; certainly it still blows. That god had such small and pretty feet. How he looked in the face, I don't know."

Another author, less important for our purpose, touched on the Gothic tendency in a light, humorous vein. C. F. Dahlgren (cf. Appendix, art. Dahlgren) recognized the saga element as an Old Norse part of the Fosforistic program, and his "The Last Fosforist" (see *Samlade arbeten*, Stockholm, 1847-52, Vol. I, pp. 142ff.) contains some harmless references to mythologies in general as well as to Icelandic literature in particular. For instance, the Fosforist's coat in this poem is "stitched together of a thousand pieces from India, Iceland, Rome, and Greece." One stanza runs as follows:

Nu är att säga	Än Bacchus än Brage
Om mythologi'n	Än Zeus och än Thor
Att den bör man äga	Än Phoibus, än Frode
I poesi'n	Än Balder hin gode
Och ömsom man tage	Och än hans bror.

"now there is this to be said about mythology, that one ought to use it in poetry. And you may take, alternately; now Bacchus, now Brage; now Zeus, now Thor, now Phoebus, now Frode; now Balder the Good, and now his Brother."

The best satire directed against the Norse myths was a long poem by J. M. Stjernstolpe, which appeared in *Allmänna Journalen* in 1820.<sup>1</sup> It was called "The Mythologies, or the Dispute of the Gods" (Mytologierna eller gudatvisten) and deals, in a comparative way, with the assumed characteristics of both the Northern and Southern systems. Naturally, the Greek mythology is taken as the esthetic standard. The plan is ingenious and the contents are positively funny. The gods of Valhalla are sent on a visit to the Olympian deities and held up to scorn and derision. Iceland is taken as the home of the Scandinavian visitors, who appear on Mt. Olympus in all their primitive grotesqueness, accompanied by a full zoölogical retinue of cats, ravens, goats and serpents.<sup>2</sup> On the arrival of the strangers a great commotion arises in Olympic circles and the goddesses, especially, suffer immense physical discomfort.<sup>3</sup> Were Odin and his Asas to dethrone Zeus? Iceland is larger than your famous Crete, says Momus to Zeus.<sup>4</sup> But, on the other hand, chronological priority is claimed for the classic myths and Zeus admonishes the strangers as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Numbers 31 and 32 for the 8th and 9th of February. Remember that the editor of *Allmänna Journalen* was P. A. Wallmark, the publicist, *par excellence*, of the Old School. As early as August 18, 1813 (No. 56) there had appeared in *Allmänna Journalen* a "slightly altered" version of the ancient saga of "Orwar Odder," to show the "dangers of flight" and the advantages of courage and bravery. It can hardly be anything but a thrust at the Goths and Fosforists. The first verse runs as follows:

"En hjälte det fanns här i Norden en gång,  
Den störste, som nånsin beskrifvits i sång,  
Tolf alnar lång,  
Och Orwar Odder han hetat.  
Som Viking han farit all världen omkring  
Och honom det timat mång underlig ting,  
Som ännu blott Sagorna vetat."

Orwar Odd is finally killed in "flight" by an arrow.

<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that cats, ravens, and he-goats were the animals attributed of Freya, Odin, and Thor, respectively. The serpent refers to the so-called Midgard-Serpent, son of Loke and Angerboda, a brother of Hel and the Fenris-Wolf. With his enormous tail he encircles the whole earth.

<sup>3</sup> Venus is thrown into convulsions at the venomous glance of the Midgard-Serpent and Juno gets the stomach-ache. Cf. Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

Dock Asar böra veta:  
 Långt förr än någon af Er var,  
 Min blixk kring himlen ljungat har,  
 Mitt namn kring verlden spordes.<sup>1</sup>

For about four months Stjernstolpe enjoyed a certain feeling of victory at the success of his poem, but, on June 21, 1820, there appeared an answer in *Anmärkarne*, called "The Mythologies, or the Dispute of the Gods. The Second Day."<sup>2</sup> The author was a "young" man, but otherwise a complete stranger, says Adlerbeth.<sup>3</sup> His poem was a "worthy refutation" of Stjernstolpe's anti-Gothic satire. In fact, Adlerbeth goes so far as to claim a defeat for the gods of Greece and Rome as well. "The real value of the poem," asserts Adlerbeth, "lies in the fact that the riders on the wooden beasts (*trämärrar*) of French literature have been defeated by their own weapon, ridicule. The latter was the last available implement for attacking the ancient Norse myths which they (the worshipers of French literature) were unable to destroy by any serious deductions." And I believe Adlerbeth to have been right. The stranger poet had detected a fundamental difference in the two mythologies which Stjernstolpe either overlooked or ignored. Stjernstolpe had unfairly compared the crude but natural Scandinavian gods with the idealized Greek deities represented in modern art and poetry. In the public refutation, therefore, the Olympic gods are stripped of their artistic embellishments, introduced in their most primitive form and dress, and sent on a return visit to the earth. Mercury suggests that they take this trip in their original, "genuinely divine splendor."<sup>4</sup> As soon as unmasked, the Greek travelers present a sad spec-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 162. "But Asas ought to know that long before any of you existed, my lightning flashed through the sky, my name was known around the world."

<sup>2</sup> *Mytologierna, eller gudatvisten. Andra dagen.* Both Stjernstolpe's poem as well as the answer to it are printed in Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, pp. 152-83, accompanied by explanatory notes. Hjärne's reprint is more easily available to most students and my references are, therefore, to this edition.

<sup>3</sup> See letter to Tegnér, dated July 14, 1820. Esaias Tegnér's papper, pp. 130-31.

<sup>4</sup> Hjärne: *Götiska förbundet*, p. 170.

tacle, indeed. The Norse visitors at Olympia were natural, though grotesque; but the Olympians become unnatural, formless monsters, and Jupiter (or Zeus, for the Greek and Roman names are used interchangeably) appears with hawk's head and horns.<sup>1</sup> Then the anonymous poet adopts a more specifically comparative method and makes such observations as these: Norse mythology has no character with ram's legs like Pan or Silenus; it has no one who is lame like Vulcan, and no maiden with a hundred breasts like the Ephesian Diana. "Awful stories" are found in each and every Greek god's biography, intrigues are frequent, and but few are of legitimate birth.<sup>2</sup> The Olympian group gets no further than Eleusis before they encounter an enormous herd of pigs. The ass, who understands them without an interpreter, leads the conversation for the Olympians and immediately thereafter Jupiter and his retinue return home disgusted.<sup>3</sup>

As early as 1810-1811—the date can be determined approximately by references to European politics—the Academician chief, Leopold, attacked in a poem that national tendency which, as even the anti-Fosforistic Malmström admits,<sup>4</sup> was common to both Fosforists and Goths. Leopold's satirical poem, of some historical significance and full of sparkling wit, was called "The New Colony, or the Revolution in the Art of Song" (*Den nya kolonien eller revolutionen i sångkonsten*),<sup>5</sup> and was directed against the current eulogies of a former "golden"

<sup>1</sup> The old images of Jupiter were sometimes represented like those of the Egyptian Osiris, his son, with a hawk-like head, or like Ammon, who appeared to Hercules in the form of a ram. Cf. Lemprière: *Classical Dictionary*, articles Osiris and Ammon.

<sup>2</sup> *Hjärne: Götiska förbundet*, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> Eleusis had a temple to Ceres, and sows were beasts of sacrifice "at the lesser mysteries." According to one tradition (Hyginus: *Poet. Astron.*, ii, 23) a speaking ass is mentioned in the myth of Dyonyusus. Dyonyusus was carried across a lake by an ass on his way to the oracle of Dodona. Cf. *Dict. of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, edited by W. Smith, London, 1844, Vol. I, p. 1047.

<sup>4</sup> *Grunddragen af svenska vitterhetens historia*, III, p. 263. According to the poem in question, the national tendency of the Fosforists must have been detected by Leopold before the Gothic School existed, as such.

<sup>5</sup> See Leopold: *Poetiska arbeten*, Uppsala, 1873, Vol. I, p. 83, or Malmström: *Svenska vitterhetens historia*, III, pp. 263ff., where the whole poem is quoted.

<sup>6</sup> Malmström: *ibid.*, p. 265.



age. The poem describes the arrangement of a *Sängerkrieg* between the nightingale (the Old School) and the recently arrived owl (the New School). "It is about time," says Leopold sharply and sarcastically, "to reinstate, at last, the song of genuine power, which as early as a thousand years ago, was sung by the owls on the mountains of Norway."<sup>1</sup> In the contest nobody would listen to the nightingale and the owl wins, cheered by the whole owl-nation, three hundred voices strong. But every mortal is frightened away, the nightingales resign, and, finally, the owls themselves are gradually driven off.<sup>2</sup> But Leopold's theoretical views on the employment of Norse mythology in poetry are stated more definitely and severely in his prose treatise on "Ancient Gothic Poetry and the New Taste for this Kind of Literature" (*Om den gamla götiska dikten och den nya smaken för detta slags vitterhet*), written about 1822 or 1823.<sup>3</sup> What the Gustavian leader believed to hold true in poetry would naturally hold true, all the more, in the plastic arts. On the face of it, this article might seem at first to be a mere warning against exaggeration, for Leopold admits that a taste for Gothic poetry may be commendable<sup>4</sup> and he himself had treated a Gothic theme in "Oden," but that the sagas or Eddas could ever be favorably compared with the ancient classical sources is deemed impossible. Leopold's conception, like that of Stjernstolpe, is one of prejudice and unalloyed preference for the "thousand vivid poetic images of the Greek genius,"<sup>5</sup> which in his opinion have become absolutely indispensable to poetic expression in European culture. Norse antiquity to Leopold becomes the "darkest and most uncivilized age,"<sup>6</sup> its "old, rough-hewn poetic figures" should be kept at a "necessary" and appropriate distance, i. e., in the

<sup>1</sup> Malmström: *ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 266-67.

<sup>3</sup> Leopold in his treatise speaks of "twelve years of lessons in art," using "art" in a broad sense to signify the poetry of the New School. Now, if Leopold refers to the Fosforists, as such, it would place the date about 1822, if to the Gothic School, *per se*, 1823. Cf. Malmström: *Svenska vitterhetens historia*, III, p. 377, where this part is quoted.

<sup>4</sup> Malmström. *Svenska vitterhetens historia*, III, p. 376.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 383.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 377-78.

"coarser and wilder culture of their own age."<sup>1</sup> Gothic antiquity does possess "a more uncivilized sensuality which is adapted for poetic treatment by a talented artist, and is, in itself, good for a change or contrast"; but it ought not to be constantly repeated, least of all with the idea of extruding "the real literature of our own age."<sup>2</sup> Leopold makes an unqualified denial that Gothic antiquity could serve as one of the large, important sources for true poetry.<sup>3</sup> A Norse motif has the advantage of stimulating attention, for it is only sparsely known, and Leopold himself confesses he has read the old *kāmpasagas* with pleasure,<sup>4</sup> but the literary form of the manliness and power therein is "undeniably lower" than that of the present age when depicted by a master hand in this "higher splendor."<sup>5</sup> That there could be any successful compromise of ancient Norse content with modern form did not occur to the lukewarm, biased chief. He did not see that his main source of prejudice was more the lack of genius to develop the Norse material, than the material itself, and so Leopold was constantly comparing masters of the Old School with dilettants of the New. That a constant use of the Northern motifs might lead to a "tedious uniformity"<sup>6</sup> was true, as had been exemplified in the poetic works of Ling.

Malmström, literary critic and partisan of Leopold, takes the same classical view; he prefers Greek to Norse mythology and believes that every impartial judge must give the same verdict. "The characters of Norse mythology," says Malmström, "are with few exceptions, rather sublime than beautiful and consequently are not so well adapted for plastic art, and least of all for sculpture."<sup>7</sup> Malmström proceeds on the same principle as Stjernstolpe of comparing the highly idealized Greek forms with the undeveloped Scandinavian forms.

I have tried in the last few pages to illustrate the Academician or anti-Romantic opposition to the introduction of Scan-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 385.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 385.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 385.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 379. Malmström did not have the opportunity to see the recently erected Gefion-fountain in Copenhagen. Gefion was originally, as we have seen, a mythological female character of the Asa-tribe.

dinavian myths into Swedish art and poetry. It now becomes necessary to retrace our steps to the year 1817.

The approaching prize-competition with Norse motifs, together with Ling's lectures and poetry, even caused some concern to a leader of the Gothic Society, Geijer. Exaggeration might defeat its own purpose, and Geijer decided to warn against extravagance. The result was the publication in the seventh number of *Iduna*, 1817, of "Reflections Concerning the Employment of the Norse Myths in Fine Art" (*Betraktelser i afseende på de nordiska myternas användande i skön konst*).<sup>1</sup> It was a landmark of its time and is still well known by students of Geijer. It caused a considerable sensation and even displeasure and was undoubtedly responsible for Ling's resignation from the Gothic Society.<sup>2</sup> Geijer's "Reflections," their debt to Winckelmann, Lessing, and Herder, as well as their contemporary influence, have recently been quite fully discussed by Adrian Molin in his "Geijer-Studier"<sup>3</sup> and to his work I refer for details. It is only necessary here to indicate the main thread of the argument and to add a few personal observations. The whole attitude of the Swedish historian is very classical in its conception of art.<sup>4</sup> He holds that sculpture is the least national of the plastic arts; its aim is the universal, and, therefore, Norse mythology is little adapted for a national art. The emphasis is laid on physical definiteness (*sinnlig bestämdhet*), and, since it is a "thousand years too late" to determine definite physical form, the only solution is

<sup>1</sup> The treatise is found in Geijer's *Samlade skrifter* (Stockholm, 1874-76, 8 vols.), Vol. I, pp. 175ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. letter from Adlerbeth to Tegnér, dated January 6, 1818. *Ur Esaias Tegnér's papper*, p. 93. Ling would never admit that Geijer's article had anything to do with his resignation. Adlerbeth, in his letter to Tegnér, favors Geijer in this matter and calls Ling's probable attitude toward a different view "most unreasonable." Cf. also Molin: *Geijer-Studier*, pp. 264-65, and note 2. Geijer, in his article, had referred, rather personally, to blunders in Gothic poetry which provoked some ill feeling in the mind of the super-patriotic Ling.

<sup>3</sup> Göteborg, 1906, pp. 244ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Blanck: *Den nordiska renässansen*, p. 432. Molin, however, has detected an influence of Romantic thought à la Fichte, as evidenced by conceptions of the social and political affairs of the time. See "Geijer-Studier," pp. 256-57.

to introduce the spirit (det ursprungliga) of the ancient myth into the recognized standard form already existing. But with poetry and painting it is different. Although Norse mythology is deficient in "external harmonious perfection,"<sup>1</sup> it does possess an inner poetic and philosophical meaning which furnishes a profitable field for the poet or painter. The deities of Norse mythology were, for the most part, characters of action, definite enough for our thought but not for the eye, and they must be represented in their living relation to humanity and may not be isolated from their time or race.<sup>2</sup> Now, as characters of action they assume human form, such as they have in the sagas, and it is primarily in connection with the heroic saga that the Norse mythological characters may be represented in art. If the motifs are chosen from the Norse myths at all, they had better be developed on canvas rather than in marble.

Geijer's treatise was a well-written and conscientious exposition of his views, and it undoubtedly had some checking influence on the overheated artists of a purely national trend. Molin states, for instance, that the Gothic Society adopted some suggestions from it for its announcements of future prize-competitions in art.<sup>3</sup> But time proved that much of Geijer's apprehension was unfounded. He overlooked the fact that a physical definiteness was the result of artistic activity and that, other things being equal, it was just as possible for characters from Norse myths to acquire a definite form as for those of Greek mythology. Geijer commits much the same fallacy as Stjernstolpe in his "Dispute of the Gods," three years later,<sup>4</sup> that of comparing the developed with the undeveloped. Molin

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Molin: Geijer-Studier, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to me to be closely analogous to Leopold's views. Leopold believed that Old Norse culture must be considered, per se, as something foreign and antiquated. Any genuine representation of Gothic antiquity, even in poetry, must be treated as a picture of itself, that is, of its own time, and must be considered too antiquated to re-introduce in any living sense. Granting their premises, and I think we must, we will have to admit that both Geijer and Leopold are right in this respect. Cf. Malmström: Svenska vitterhetens historia, III, p. 378, where this part of Leopold's article is quoted.

<sup>3</sup> Molin: Geijer-Studier, p. 266.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. above, pp. 115ff.

still contends with Geijer, however, that, so far as sculpture is concerned, such a development could only take place, as in the case of the Greek, "before the myth became a myth," that is, while it was still a living, religious conception of the people.<sup>1</sup> The creations of Fogelberg seem to be an exception to the rule, according to Molin.<sup>2</sup> But the very exception proves that such a development is possible when undertaken by a real genius.

Tegnér, it seems to me, gives the best common-sense solution of the problem.<sup>3</sup> He pointed out that originally the forms in Greek mythology were as crude and indefinite as those in question, and had they been limited to mere poetic treatment they would not have been any more definite than the Scandinavian ones.<sup>4</sup> And not only that, but where can you draw the line between saga and myth? There is no sharp line of demarcation, and if you concede that the heroic saga may be employed in art, how can you consistently bar the myth? Human art has no better type for either heaven or earth than the human type. Divinity is merely an idealized human form, as far as plastic art is concerned. Granting this, Geijer's treatise loses some of its force. It was a question that could not be answered by any theoretical or philosophical deductions; it was a practical problem and the sole method of solving it was by actual attempt.<sup>5</sup> Tegnér writes to Leopold, February 7, 1822:<sup>6</sup> "It is true that the so-called Gothic poetry has up to this time been a failure in Sweden; but if we, who have failed, were only really honest, we would admit that Thor, Odin, and Frey and all the old fighters are absolutely innocent in the matter." In other words, it depended upon the poet or artist whether the Norse myths could be made worth while, a view which Tegnér himself proved sufficiently, as far as poetry was concerned. Tegnér, also, did not like Geijer's plain reference to Ling's poetic mis-

<sup>1</sup> Molin: Geijer-Studier, p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Geijer-Studier, p. 264, for Molin's criticism of Tegnér's opinion in this matter.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. letter by Tegnér to Adlerbeth of July 5, 1818, for criticism by Tegnér of Geijer's article. Jubelfestupplaga, V, pp. 154ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. letter by Tegnér to Adlerbeth of December 21, 1817. Jubelfestupplaga, V, pp. 131ff.

<sup>6</sup> Jubelfestupplaga, V, p. 243.

takes. Nobody was more conscious of the mistakes than Ling himself, and one ought to use some indulgence towards a product (referring to "Gylfe") upon which so much seriousness, genius, and art had been spent.<sup>1</sup>

Even in plastic art there was no such danger in Ling's preachings as was at first supposed. In fact, I am unable to detect any essential difference of viewpoint, even between Geijer and Ling. It was a relative difference rather than a fundamental one, a fact which is clearly brought out in "Symbolism of the Eddas" which we have already discussed.<sup>2</sup> Like Tegnér, Ling leaves much to the artist, and it was never his intention to offend the sense of beauty by recommending indefinite monsters to be done in marble or on canvas. Fully recognizing the experimental stage of a national art, he proceeded cautiously to give hints to prospective painters and sculptors, in order to establish gradually a definite physical form for his beloved Scandinavian characters. I doubt very much whether Ling ever expected to see a perfected Norse type immediately. He was on the right track; the Scandinavian gods were already partially idealized in his mind, like the Greek gods in the mind of the Greek artist, and he never thought of advocating anything but the perfected human form for divinities.<sup>3</sup> But the human form is the form of the heroic saga as advocated by Geijer, so where is the dangerous radicalism or cause for alarm? Ling himself asserted that the highest god or All-father, who was not conceived by our ancestors in sensual, that is, human form, could not be represented in plastic art like the other nature-divinities.<sup>4</sup>

The efforts of Ling and his disciples were crowned with more practical success than was ever anticipated in the first public exhibition of the new art, held in the Kirstein House,

<sup>1</sup> See letter by Tegnér of July 5, 1818. (See p. 122, note 4).

<sup>2</sup> To be sure, the "Symbolism" did not appear in print until 1819, two years after Geijer's article, but it was an independent résumé of Ling's own lectures, held from 1814-17, and could never have been influenced by Geijer.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ling: *Samlade arbeten*, II, pp. 443-44. Cf. also above, p. 107.

<sup>4</sup> Ling: *Samlade arbeten*, II, p. 446.

in Stockholm, beginning the 19th day of May, 1818.<sup>1</sup> All artists were invited to participate. Attempts had been made to frustrate the plans for the new exhibition but to no avail. The catalog of one thousand copies went into a new edition and the time of the exhibition was prolonged by request. The innovation was a financial success also. Even royalty patronized the exhibition and His Majesty the King ordered Fogelberg's models of the Norse gods to be executed in marble for himself. In the "Addenda," in the eleventh number of *Iduna*,<sup>2</sup> we have the names of the winners and the amount of the prizes in the Norse art-competitions from 1818 to 1822, as well as the name and character of the artistic production in each case. For instance: Alex. Malmquist is awarded a prize of 20 ducats for an oil-painting of "Brage and Idun," and P. Berggren a similar amount for a representation of "Odin at the Spring of Mimer."

No one rejoiced more over the success of the exhibition than Tegnér. He writes to Adlerbeth, August 20, 1818:<sup>3</sup> "It makes me rejoice heartily that the Gothic Society's exhibition was such a success." He hopes it is demonstrated that the reawakened feeling for ancient Norse is not an insane idea or merely a passing mania, "but that it can and ought to express itself in permanent creations, either in song or marble, and thus lay the foundation for an independent, national art."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "Berättelse angående den af Götiska Förbundet anställda konst-expositionen 1818." In *Iduna*, Vol. XI, pp. 82ff. Vedel is scarcely correct when he characterizes (see "Svensk romantik," p. 260) the result of this exposition as "not gratifying."

<sup>2</sup> "Tillägg, rörande de af Götiska Förbundet anställda taffingar i behandling af nordiska myther i bildande konst, samt konstexpositionen 1818," pp. 97-99.

<sup>3</sup> See Jubelfestupplaga, V, p. 160.

<sup>4</sup> Tegnér recognizes, as seen in this letter, that plastic art is universal in its essence, as Geijer had urged, and that European culture which "more or less grinds off all nationality" would have to be taken into account, even if it did not *seriously* hamper the development of a national art.

## CHAPTER IV

### ERIK JOHAN STAGNELIUS : THE OLD NORSE ELEMENT AS A VEHICLE FOR ROMANTICISM

Åt sången invigd re'n som barn jag var,  
Min själ förtrogen med naturens under.  
I grottors skymning, rosenlundars sköt,  
Der silfverkällor, musikaliskt runno  
Och näktergalen ömma toner gjöt,  
Då etherns lampor öfver jorden brunno,  
Bland väna trollmör der, med kransadt hår  
Och kinden smekt af milda vestanväder,  
Hur lyckligt flöto mina barndomsår!

Kwaser in "Gunlög."

The most thorough Romanticist in Sweden was the young and suffering Stagnelius. Both his life and work point him out as the natural exponent of what is deepest and most typical in Romanticism. He did not have to affiliate himself with any new school to be called Romantic. He did not have to take part in any polemics to advertise his theories. Stagnelius was something more than an obscure theorist; he was primarily a creator. He loved to produce and what he produced came spontaneously, without undue effort or adherence to any set literary dogma. He was always independent. He educated himself by persistent browsing in his father's library, wrote independently, lived alone, and finally died alone at the age of thirty.<sup>1</sup> He was an original, self-taught savant, to whom both the Northern and Southern mythologies were equally familiar. We may call him a Romantic genius. Mystical yearning, personal suffering, deep pathos, "singing eloquence," and characteristic coloring are nowhere better exemplified than in the poetry of Stagnelius. No one understood better than he the deeper significance of myth and religion, and the constant strife between

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix: Note on Stagnelius.



matter and spirit, as pictured both in myth and religion, is a favorite theme of our poet. Sensuousness, in a carnal sense generally, is a striking quality of much of Stagnelius's poetry. Woman is the crown of nature and at the same time the most dangerous phenomenon in the universe; not even the gods can escape her artful cunning.

These are some of the characteristics noticeable in Stagnelius's treatment of Gothic themes. In other words the saga element becomes a vehicle for the Romantic, the didactic, and the autobiographical. But the vehicle itself is as important as the rest, and one is a spontaneous supplement of the other. There seems to be no militant effort to emphasize either one, and yet both are sufficiently prominent. Stagnelius's Gothicism is found in conjunction with Romanticism, then, in a more restricted sense, and Hellenism. These three the poet weaves together into a lyrical fabric of the most dazzling colors and pleasing melodies.

The saga element, though not intentionally obtrusive, is conspicuous in the very titles of Stagnelius's poems. "Gunlög," "Wisbur," and "Svegder" are recognized immediately as familiar names from the prose Edda and the *Heimskringla*. "Sigurd Ring" calls up the semi-historical exploits of a mighty pagan king, and "Blenda" reminds us of a period in Swedish history when harsh viking measures were not yet forgotten. Of these five works "Gunlög" is a fragmentary epic; "Blenda" is an epic, technically finished but intrinsically incomplete; "Svegder" is a dramatic fragment; and "Wisbur" and "Sigurd Ring" are short tragedies in the Greek style with choruses. In all of these we observe both a general enthusiasm for the saga age and an effort to interpret specific myths or characters. A favorite Romantic theme, like the origin of poetry in "Gunlög," gives the author opportunity for a more lengthy discourse, and here we must study the author himself in terms of Norse mythology. But the Norse element is never a mere rhetorical ornamentation, a superficial jumble of names; it is always a thoroughly digested part of a poetic nutriment. It is a background blending harmoniously with the poet's modern reflections and feelings.

All of the above-mentioned productions were written during the last eleven years of the author's life, but none of them were published until after the author's death in 1823. In taking up his Gothic themes more in detail one need not pay much attention to chronology in composition, and but little is known about it with certainty. We shall consider "Blenda" first.

"Blenda" is a "Romantic Poem in Five Cantos" and is written in rimed, iambic verse of varying length. It is based on an old saga-like tradition, of which one form goes back to heathendom and the other, the one which Stagnelius used, goes back to a later narrative.<sup>1</sup> In it the patriotic Blenda, at the head of a band of Swedish women, attacks and slays the common enemy, the Dane. The scene is laid in the district of Wärend in the province of Småland, and the enemy comes from Skåne in the extreme southern part of Sweden, which then belonged to Denmark. In Stagnelius, also, the scene is laid right after the introduction of Christianity, and Blenda has become a demonic Judith who, for personal reasons, takes a horrible revenge on the Danes. With the Venus-girdle as an allurements, the amorous swains are enticed into camp and cruelly murdered.

Since the poet does not localize his action in the real saga age, the viking element becomes epic and general in character. Some events are given in terms of specific Norse myths, and comparative references are made to them occasionally, but otherwise it is merely a general glorification of the manly viking exploits and character. It is the effeminateness of the modern age and the sturdiness of the past that are contrasted, much as in Nicander and Beskow later. But Stagnelius makes a very ingenious plan. An unflinching bravery, like that of the heathen forefathers, is at first extolled, then aroused in the lethargic Christian warriors, who sail away at once across the Baltic to fight the pagans in Livonia. A curious but plausible plan: by pagan methods the pagans themselves are to be converted to Christianity.

The eulogy of the saga age is found in the beginning of the first canto, in Alle's rousing speech to his warriors. These

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Introduction by Hammar skjöld to Stagnelius's "*Samlade skrifter*," Stockholm, 1836, p. 32.

have spent nineteen years in drinking, eating, hunting, and courting the favor of women. But their heathen ancestors did otherwise. In the early spring as soon as the snow had melted, they set out over the sea "to conquer or die," while "many a lonely maid stood waving a farewell with swan-white kerchief in hand." During the whole summer the viking roved about the world. He sunk fleets and broke down strongholds, rich coasts were burned and "the water-sprite blushed with blood." Scarcely had the leaves begun to fall, when the viking boats came back laden with plunder. The faithful maiden welcomed her champion, the lighted torches illumined the castle, and the drinking-horn and string-instrument contributed to the celebration. These were happy times for lovers; "there were no limits, no laws for men whose right arm was their only god," and no priest could condemn them. But since the "white Christ" came into the land, all has changed: the weapons rust, the ship decays, and ancestral manliness is buried forever in the ancestral funeral-mounds. The road to exploits and strength is closed and life has become one eternal monotony. But the viking methods must return, even if "the age of the saga is past and the heavenly kingdom has driven out the glorious Valhalla." Again swords are to flash and cloven hearts bleed, though no sacrifices glow on Odin's altar.

Thus Alle continues. Then he makes a specific appeal for vikingism to his oldest son Adolf who has fallen in love with Blenda. Alle does not blame his son for entertaining a passion for a woman, but he must win his beloved in a manly way. In olden times bravery often went hand in hand with love, but success in love could follow only as a reward of bravery and the heathen maiden often girded on her lover's sword.<sup>1</sup> The vik-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the following strophe (29) from "Sång till kvinnorna i Norden" by Stagnelius:

O sköna tid! i Sagans ljud  
Blott ännu lefvande på jorden,  
Då ynglingen i höga Norden  
Till hjälte valdes af sin brud!  
Hans dygder inga skranker funno,  
Och modet kände ingen gräns.  
O sköna tid! då kärlekens  
Och ärans eld förente brunno!

ing was not tormented by weak emotions; he rushed through arrows, swords, and fire to win his prize. "The beauties at that time sat in high ladies'-bowers, surrounded by dragons and firm walls and could be won only by deeds and perfect manhood. Thus Ragnar Lodbrok won the hand of Herröd's daughter. And so, only when Adolf returns a victor from war, may he think of love. The joy will then be double.

In the third canto Stagnelius introduces another link which connects the modern epic with the pagan tradition. It is the inexorable Norse fate and the fulfilment of a prophecy. Eight generations back a Northern sibyl, "a century-old maid with wrinkled face and locks of snow," had appeared at Blenda's ancestral castle. To the beautiful Gerd a daughter had just been born, but the brave and stern Grim had demanded of the gods a son. Incensed, he determined to cast the child before the ravens upon the heath, and the death of the daughter seemed assured, when the sibyl appeared, drew forth a dagger, and rebuked the angry parent in the following prophetic terms: "With this dagger, a woman of this race shall save Sweden and conquer Jutland." The daughter was allowed to live, and the pagan instrument had then been handed down from mother to the oldest daughter for seven generations until now, finally, it was delivered into the hands of Blenda by her father. A miraculous power—we may call it fate—connected with a certain mechanical instrument from heathen times, was now to do its work through the agency of a Christian maid. A curious but beautiful and broad-minded thought: Norse paganism and Christianity in unison, and the latter the glorious fulfilment of the former.

Stagnelius tried his hand at humor in "Blenda," but was not particularly successful. His expressions of humor are too realistic, often indelicate and in bad taste. Atterbom called "Blenda" a "half-wanton Wieland epopée," due to the author's early studies of "Idris" and "Oberon."<sup>1</sup>

The plan of "Blenda" was probably earlier than that of any other work of Stagnelius, but it was not finished until about

<sup>1</sup> See "Literära karakteristiker." *Senare bandet*, Örebro, 1870. Recension of Stagnelius's works, pp. 51-52.

1816.<sup>1</sup> The first product to be finished—if we may use that term in speaking of a fragment—was the epic “*Gunlög*,” the greater part of which was written in 1812. Here the satirical element was present in the original source but in Stagnelius’s epic it is much suppressed. The rough, grotesque, and grossly satirical gives way to a lyrico-epic “height and dignity.” The pleasant Romantic elements are more prominent. Everything is colored in purple, rose, or silver, and bathed in moonlight in a “gloomy pine-forest.” It is less clear and more subjective than “*Blenda*” but the style and form<sup>2</sup> are better. First a word about the original source.

“The Tales of Brage” (*Bragarœður*, Chapters 3–4) in the *Snorre Edda* give us two distinct parts of the original myth: (1) the origin of Suttung’s mead, and (2) Odin’s capture of it, signifying the origin of poetry and how it became the property of the gods. The divine Asas and the Wanes had a war with each other. They came together to make peace and spat their spittle<sup>3</sup> into one vessel, and out of this they created Kwasir, who was so wise that he could give advice in all things. Kwasir was killed through treachery by the dwarfs, Fjalar and Galar. His blood was collected in two pitchers and a kettle, mixed with honey, and a mead prepared from it, and he who drank thereof became a poet and a sage. Once the same dwarfs caused the death of the giant Gilling and the mead was given as indemnity to Gilling’s son, Suttung, for the death of his father. Suttung had the mead brought into the mountain Hnitbjorg, where it was guarded by his daughter Gunnlod (*Gunlög*). This is the end of the first part. Then Odin, under the name of Bolwerk, comes to Suttung’s brother, Baugi. He brings about the death of his nine servants and offers to take their place in return for a drink of Kwasir’s (i. e., Suttung’s) mead. Odin stays through the summer but in the winter he demands his reward. Suttung refuses Odin and Baugi the

<sup>1</sup> It was probably written immediately before “*Wladimir den Store*,” which appeared in 1817.

<sup>2</sup> It is written in easy-flowing, regular rimed pentameters with alternating masculine and feminine rimes.

<sup>3</sup> The spittle of the Asas and Wanes represents the spiritual and the formal in poetry, respectively.

coveted draught; and so Bolwerk (Odin) takes an auger, bores a hole through the Hnitbjorg mountain, changes himself to a serpent, and crawls through to Gunnlod. He spends three nights with her, gets three draughts of the mead, and empties all three vessels. He then returns as he had come, assumes the shape of an eagle and flies away. He is pursued by Suttung, likewise in eagle form, but Odin arrives home in time to eject the mead into vessels stationed in the yard for the purpose, and Suttung has to be satisfied with a few drippings from behind. From now on the poet-making drink is the property of the gods alone.

We can easily see how a thorough Romanticist would revel in such a theme. Beneath the external crudeness of the Norse myth we have the profound meaning; the divine ownership of poetry. It was this theme which appealed to the young Stagnelius, as it did to so many German Romanticists. The poet was on a par with the gods and his art was a divine art and of divine origin. Consequently the humorous element in "Gunlög" is less developed, the crudeness is to a large extent removed, and the details of the original are altered<sup>1</sup> to suit the main purpose: the apotheosis of poetry. Then also it becomes the struggle between the powers of light and darkness, i. e., between the Asas and the dwarfs, and the former must conquer. Wickedness is punished, for the norns are ever watchful, and specific violence against the sons of poetry is eventually avenged. "Gunlög" eulogizes also the magic power of music. Music is the art, *par excellence*,—and how Romantic this is,—which can soothe the restless soul and arouse the warriors to action. Stagnelius's epic has become the carrier for expressions of tender moods and melancholy, for elegiac effusions, for didacticism, and for highly colored descriptions. Much emphasis is laid upon the history of the creation according to the Norse myth and references are made to semi-historical facts and viking customs.

The epic "Gunlög" comprises four complete cantos with fragments of a fifth and sixth. The first canto deals with Kwasir's divine calling as a poet, his war against the Asas.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, Stagnelius uses only one vessel to collect Kwasir's blood.

Kwasir has been brought up by Northern fairies "near sacred springs in the quiet grove." At seventeen he goes out to sing of the glory of the gods; to spread life and pleasure through the almighty power of song and music; and to sing of weapons and of the golden age when all was innocent.<sup>1</sup> He arrives at Asa-gard where he "shines like a star." Here he tells of Odin's beneficial immigration into the North and either sings mildly of death, or the strings of his harp "roar forth the thunder of war" and arouse the desire for murder. In the interim, Suttung, who reigns in the extreme North at Hnitbjorg, hears that foreign vessels have arrived on the shore of Manhem with new gods and religious services and decides to fight them. Clubs and bows and arrows are to be used "after the custom of the forefathers," "shields are cleaned with sand and bear-fat," and the edges of steel sharpened on smooth rocks.

In the second canto Kwasir arrives at Suttung's court, his countenance beaming with "divine enchantment." With him is the warrior Brage who comes as a special messenger from Odin to sue for the hand of Suttung's daughter, Gunlög. The skald sings of his youth,<sup>2</sup> his divine gift, and of the creation of the world. But Suttung is enraged, he is only temporarily pacified by the magic power of Kwasir's music and determines "to drink intoxication out of the Asas' skulls," much as the forefathers were wont to do.<sup>3</sup>

The third canto is a beautiful and sublime mingling of the Romantic and the Gothic. Here we find gods and dwarfs, dreams, pathos, miracles, caves, and moonlight. Brage and Kwasir descend into a cave on a mountain to rest. Kwasir dreams. He realizes he will not live much longer, and so comes out upon a cliff near a lonely shore and sings his best songs. He tells of the dwarfs and of their partial destruction by Asa-Thor. And, alas! two dwarfs who had their forge beneath the mountain were annoyed by Kwasir's harp—"the breast where dwells the hunger for gold" is immune to the magic power of song and fraternal sympathy—and capture the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ja, säll var jorden innan Lokes brott  
Och Höders blindhet hunnit Balder fälla, ll. 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. quotation at beginning of chapter.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. lines 248-49.

minstrel. He is bound naked to a marble pillar and murdered. But the divine norn is present. She removes the corpse to save the skald from disgrace, his sacred blood is changed by a miracle to a golden yellow mead, and, together with the harp, is deposited in the lowest part of the grotto.

In the fourth canto the dwarfs are executed for not having a suit of armor ready which they were forging for Suttung, and thus the death of the skald is, in a sense, already avenged. Suttung makes further preparations to reconquer Manhem from the new gods. The army eats bear-steak prepared in copper kettles, and a mead is prepared from honey and hops. Then the dwarfs' grotto is plundered. Hjalmar, a character invented by the poet, is led by fate to Kwasir's blood or mead. He had before the making of a poet; now he becomes a real skald. His vision includes new worlds, his feelings melt together into a symphony, and everything becomes purple and gold. Through the winds of the night, among the tall pines and in a silvery moonlight the heavenly tones issue forth from his harp. The gates of heaven are now truly open to him. Suttung hears the harp and, angered, pursues the skald, but the latter is protected by the norn. It is now that Suttung procures the wonderful mead and decides to entrust it to the care of his daughter Gunlög. She is to be the custodian of it at the castle of Hnithjorg until her father's victorious return from the war with Odin. In the meantime Brage has disappeared—the poet does not make it clear when—and returns to Odin with the tidings, while Suttung goes to sleep listening to Hjalmar's harp. Then Thor is given command of the Asa-troops, for love and longing has deprived Odin of the necessary energy to carry armor. Thus the poet:

Så stämmer kärlek hjeltars styrka ner,  
Så äfven Gudar tråna för begären.<sup>1</sup>

The favorite thought of Stagnelius, that woman is the cause of the downfall of both men and gods, is well illustrated in the fragment of the fifth and sixth cantos. The wise Mimer

<sup>1</sup> Thus love takes away the strength of heroes; thus even the gods yearn for desires (i. e., the passion of love).



points out that the Asas will never conquer Jothem unless they obtain Kwasir's golden harp to arouse the men to courage. How is this to be done? Freya's maid Lofne is selected to entice Hjalmar by womanly cunning which can do anything in the world. Hjalmar resists the temptation for a while, but finally yields passionately, Lofne obtains the harp, and arrives at Odin's castle with it. The last part of the fragment deals with Odin's visit to Gunlög. It is extremely passionate, naive, and suggestive. In the morning after his nocturnal sojourn, Odin drinks the mead, embraces his sweetheart again, assumes the form of an eagle (as in the original source), and flies away. In Asa-gard he ejects the mead into a beaker which "rings melodiously at every drop." Brage, who has been waiting for him, drinks it and now feels a higher divinity burning in his heart. His glance is directed toward the canopy of the stars and he is crowned king of skalds. The Jota-army is crushed and driven into the far North where they live as Lapps. Hjalmar gets a place among the skalds and Gunlög becomes the wife of Odin.

It is clear from the above analysis that in "Gunlög" Stagnelius was most interested in the purely poetic, the personal, the feminine, and the Romantic. He molds the myth to suit his will. In the next work to be considered we shall notice a somewhat different attitude.

In no production has the poet followed the original source as closely as in "Wisbur." In this short five-act tragedy our attention is focused upon the original narrative, as given by Snorre Sturleson in the Ynglinga Saga. Fate, which played a secondary part in "Blenda" and "Gunlög," becomes the principal motive in "Wisbur." A curse like that upon Andvari's treasure in the Völsunga Saga rests upon our hero. It is the necessary expiation of old sins and the unavoidable repetition of the same which gives the tragic setting. It is a logical Hellenic-Gothic sequence of sin, curse, blood, and tears. Then Stagnelius weaves into his fabric the danger of ambition, the superiority of lowliness to greatness and honor, and emphasizes again the power and character of woman.

It will be remembered that Livijn had in mind a trilogy on the

saga of Wisbur (Visbur), but it was never written. The main facts of the original form of the saga have, therefore, been given already.<sup>1</sup> We shall see that the story in the drama coincides on the whole with the original.

The enchantress Huld gives us the past history of the fatal chain, now worn by Hildur. The golden chain had once been the property of Odin's wife. It was made by the dwarf Sindre, it had the property of producing nothing but strife and war, and had been stolen by Loki for the destruction and enticement of all the gods' children. It was promised by Vaulande, Wisbur's father, to Drifva in Finland, but Vaulande was faithless, and died as a consequence, through his former sweetheart's revenge.

Now the situation becomes analogous in Wisbur's own case. His first wife Öda has been deserted. He has two sons, Gissler (Gisel) and Auder (Audur), by her and the chain and throne should belong to them. Öda appears at Wisbur's court at Uppsala to claim her just dues. A large feast is being prepared to which all are invited, including the two sons. The gods do not seem propitious but Wisbur goes blindly on. Öda's request is refused, and Wisbur declares honestly and directly that he does not love his former wife any more. Whereupon Öda becomes a raging animal, a ferocious Penthesilea, who would gladly "drink blood as she drinks the frothing mead." After a consultation with Vanlander's (Vaulande's) spirit, the reigning couple are made acquainted with the pending catastrophe. Soon crowds appear, surround the castle, and capture it. Hildur, in despair, chokes herself with the cursed chain, Wisbur falls on his sword. Auder comes on the stage with the coveted jewel, and now Öda is ready to die.

In the original the chain is mentioned only in connection with Wisbur (in Chap. 17 of the *Ynglinga Saga*), and the former history of the neck-ring is not mentioned at all. Stagnelius supplies the name, also, of Wisbur's second wife; the saga tells us merely that he "took to himself another wife." Likewise the details of the catastrophe have been altered to suit the dra-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. I, p. 72, where the original narrative is given.

matic situation; but the fundamental motivation of the original source has been preserved.

"Wisbur" is a marvelous harmony of Gothicism and Hellenism. Of course, it is primarily a lyrical reading drama; and for this reason the choruses are very prominent and contain perhaps the most beautiful poetry in the tragedy. Here the Hellenic-antique, however, overshadows the Scandinavian-antique. And what wonderful harmony here of form and content! Öda makes her awful, revengeful resolutions in ominous dactylic tetrameters;<sup>1</sup> when Wisbur's castle is surrounded, the chorus gives us the details in rapid dimeters, alternating with tetrameters;<sup>2</sup> the combat between father and son is told in exciting iambic tetrameters;<sup>3</sup> and a temporary calm after the storm is indicated by alternating tetrameters, and trimeters of the dactylic foot.<sup>4</sup> The main argument is written in the modern blank verse with little action and, like the author's other works, with much coloring of rose, lily, purple and silver. The mild sighs, moonlight and mystical yearning of a Romantic atmosphere are not wanting.

Stagnelius has put some thoughts into the minds of the characters Wisbur and Hildur which may well have an autobiographical application, especially when we know of the poet's own mental and physical suffering.

Hildur, in the first act—we may well call it a mere scene—says: "It is easy to die but cruel to tremble eternally." No doubt the poet felt the truth of this assertion. Again, in the fourth act, after Hildur has announced the decreed doom to come, Wisbur answers with a grim humor:

- <sup>1</sup> Cf. Ormar från Nastrand! sliten mitt bröst!  
Spruten ert gift i mitt rasande hjerta!
- <sup>2</sup> Cf. Ack! lössläppt är fejden;  
En rasande tiger,  
Snart fråssar den grymme på likströdda torg.
- <sup>3</sup> Cf. Det vilda hafvets raseri  
Och stormens vrede tyglen I—  
Kan menskan blott ej hugnad bli?
- <sup>4</sup> Cf. Stjernorna blänka så mildt i azuren  
Blommorna sofva i dalen.  
Lugn är den eviga, hulda naturen,  
Andas blott njutning och väl.

Med döden alltså endast? Goda Hildur!  
 Visst skall jag dö; jag visste det förut.  
 Den höga Oden före mig ju dödde,  
 Han, Valhalls konung, alla diars hufvud,  
 Den rika Niord, åkerbrukets Gud,  
 Och Yngve Frey, den gyllne tidens drott,  
 Och Fjolner, Svegder, och min far Vanlander.  
 Ej annat öde kan jag vänta mig.<sup>1</sup>

Incidentally we get, at the same time, a good sprinkling of names from Norse mythology.

"Sigurd Ring," another short tragedy in pentameters, is very much like "Wisbur." The formal characteristics are the same; the unities are observed, the characters few, and choruses extol the heroes and heroine. There is little action; most of it is epic and lyrical. It has dramatic episodes of touching intensity, but it is too brief for a stage play. It has the usual amount of Romantic epithets and mystical longing, and evinces the most stirring pathos. No Gothic work of Stagnelius—perhaps none of his works—depicts such intensity of feeling, it seems to me, as "Sigurd Ring." And the almost imperceptible blending of realism and lyricism in the tragedy proves unmistakably that the author is a poet of genius.

Again, "das Ewig-weibliche" plays an important rôle. In fact, it seems as if the poet at times were more interested in the heroine than in the hero. The tragedy could just as well have been called "Hilma," the name of the heroine, as "Sigurd Ring." How Stagnelius delights in the glorification of womanly beauty! Beauty is god-like, and the terms used in describing that of woman are frequently—and naturally—compounds of "snow" and "lily." As in "Wisbur," there is a personal note, an evidence of the poet's own suffering. In Act III, for instance, there is much about hope, patience, and a silent resignation to whatever fate may have in store for us.

<sup>1</sup> [And so you come to announce] Death only? Why, my good Hildur! Of course I am to die; I knew that before. Why, the high Odin before me died, he, the king of Valhalla, the chief of all the gods. The rich Niord, the god of agriculture; and Yngve Frey, the king of the Golden Age; and Fjolner, Svegder, and my father Vanlander; no other fate may I expect.

The Old Norse element in "Sigurd Ring" is different from that in "Wisbur." In the former the original source is more truly historical and the emphasis, therefore, laid more upon viking characteristics than upon pure Norse myths. The viking qualities are idealized and accounts of them clothed in elevated language. The Northern pirate's directness of speech and uprightness is well illustrated. A promise once made is always kept. A death on the battlefield, either self-inflicted or at the hand of another, is the ideal death for an heroic viking, and the blue dwelling-place of the water-sprite is a charming grave for a Norse woman. And this has divine sanction. That Alf dies on the battlefield with Sigurd's sword, wielded by Sigurd himself, is not only desired by Alf, but decreed and fulfilled by the fate of the gods. In addition to the strictly viking element, also, we have much of the poet's reflection in "Sigurd Ring," expressed in terms of Norse myths. In illustrating the tremendous power of love (in Act II), Stagnelius introduces again—and this time he follows the original myth more closely—the story of Suttung's mead. That is, he uses that part of Norse mythology which best suits his Romantic temperament.

Sigurd Ring was one of the last kings of the mythological age of the North. He made himself the ruler of all Scandinavia by the defeat of Harald Hildetand at the memorable battle of Bråvallahed in Småland, Sweden, 730 A. D. This was the last battle in which Odin himself is said to have appeared on earth, and most of the nobles and heroes of the whole North met in combat.<sup>1</sup> The victory of Sigurd Ring over Harald Hildetand is mentioned in Saxo Grammaticus in the eighth book.

The scene of the original story of Stagnelius's tragedy, according to Hammarskjöld,<sup>2</sup> is laid in Norway, and Alf-sol (Hilma) is the daughter of a sub-king of Norway. Here Sigurd, king of Svithiod (Sweden), sues for the hand of Alf-sol but is refused by the father and brothers on the ground of old

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Paul C. Sinding: *The Scandinavian Races*, New York, 1875, pp. 47ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Introduction to Stagnelius's "*Samlade skrifter*," Stockholm, 1836, pp. 36-37.

age. Then, as had been the viking custom, Sigurd resorts to force. But since Sigurd is a mighty and feared warrior, the brothers anticipate the outcome of the encounter by giving their sister poison before the fray opens. When Sigurd finds her dead he dies himself, "as he had lived, among the billows and flames."<sup>1</sup>

Stagnelius localizes his tragedy in Denmark in the province of Jutland, and the action which we see takes place in a colonnade-hall in Alf's castle. The name of the heroine is Hilma; Alf is her brother and guardian and under-king of Jutland; Ragnar is a hero and Hilma's accepted lover; and Sigurd, as in history, is an old man and king of Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The tragic conflict, as in the original, is between genuine love and earthly power. It is duty, sworn friendship, and honor against splendor, high position, and faithlessness. Hilma does not care for happiness in the ordinary sense; she wants a heart, and is, naturally, willing to die for her love.

The plot is very simple. Sigurd, who has always been victorious in battle, demands the hand of Hilma from her brother. The old king is straightway rejected, for Alf refuses to break his word that Ragnar shall possess her love. The refusal means war, and war under the circumstances means the defeat and probable death of Hilma's protectors. And so Hilma takes the poison prepared for her, and in the presence of her lover, Alf and Ragnar are both slain in the battle that follows, Sigurd himself commits suicide, and the bodies of Sigurd and Hilma are burned on the same funeral pyre upon the monarch's ship.

That Stagnelius had the power to create a scene of dramatic beauty is proved in the fourth act. Sigurd is just returning with the blood of Alf and Ragnar upon his conscience. He has sent thousands to Valhalla before without the slightest feeling of compunction, but the last deed worries him. In the meantime the body of Hilma has been prepared for the last

<sup>1</sup> For his own source, Hammarskjöld refers in his Introduction to "Sveriges historia för ungdom," by M. Bruzelius. I have not seen this work myself.

rites and is lying in state. Gerda, the fostermother, tells Sigurd, who knows nothing of Hilma's death, that his bride is waiting for him in wedding array, calm, silent, and smiling. The subsequent scene, when Sigurd discovers the real state of affairs, and the heroic lamentations of the old viking king at Hilma's bier produce a dramatic situation of immense power.

The poet's own hopeful and serene view of the life to come finds a suitable expression in "Sigurd Ring" in terms of Norse mythology. The tone is that of a deep religiosity and faith in a better eternal life. The chorus in the last act sings first of the final destruction of the world. Then, last of all, it sings of the eternal bliss to come, when evil is no more; when Balder and Nanna return from the subjugated kingdom of Hel; and when the Asas discover anew in the green grass the divine runes of Allfather.

That Stagnelius knew his Norse mythology and understood its profound meaning perfectly, is nowhere better illustrated than in the interesting, seven-page dramatic fragment "Svegder." In the original source the poet found the very essence of the moral and religious struggles of mankind. He found his own agonizing, Faustian struggle of two souls, diametrically opposed to one another, dwelling in the same breast. Here was the golden opportunity to dwell on the everlasting war between matter and spirit. Here the poet found a vehicle for symbolism and philosophy; here, again, woman becomes the only conqueror of gods; and back of it all are the blind, incomprehensible judgments of fate.

The narrative of the original Svegder (Svegde)<sup>1</sup> is found in the fifteenth chapter of the Ynglinga Saga by Sturleson. It deals with an Uppsala king's journey to the Black Sea to find Odin the Old. On the way he is enticed into a mountain by dwarfs and never returns. According to Sturleson, it was Svegder's second effort to reach Gudhem, i. e., "god-home," the home of Odin. "Once more Svegde set out to reach Gudhem. In the eastern part of Sweden (Svithiod) there is a large village by the name of Stone (Sten), where there is a rock as large as a big house. In the evening after sunset, when

<sup>1</sup> He was the grandfather of Wisbur, whom we have treated above.

Svegde was returning from the drinking-bout to his sleeping chamber, he looked at the rock and saw that a dwarf sat beneath it. Svegde and his men were very much intoxicated and ran against the rock. The dwarf stood in the door, calling to Svegde, and bade him come in, if he wished to find Odin. Svegde hastened to come inside the rock, which closed immediately, and Svegde never came back."

Of the original *dramatis personae* only one character (the dwarf) appears in Stagnelius's fragment. But the poet has introduced three others: Nore, a giant; Sindre, a dwarf, servant, and watchman in the employ of Nore; and Hild, Nore's daughter, who is to entice Svegder. The hero himself does not appear, but we are acquainted with everything there is to know about him. He is the fifth grandson of Fridulf, who formerly established altars to the glory of Odin, and represents the power of light. Opposed to him are the dwarfs and the giant Nore, who represent the servants of darkness. From this list of characters the main theme may be imagined without further comment.

The dwarf has just completed a chain, the making of which has been entrusted to him by the King of the Mountain, Nore. The different links of the chain furnish material for philosophical reflections on the judgments of fate.<sup>1</sup> Nore tells the dwarf to keep the "new Gleipner" (the chain) which has been forged by the powers of revenge for destructive purposes against Odin's children. Then follows a brief history of the creation and of the original strife between the gods and the giants. Nore summons the sons of Ymer (here, the dwarfs), reveals to them their origin, and inspires in them a hope of future joy. The giants and dwarfs are brothers, and upon their altars the people were wont to worship, until Odin came and defeated the King of Materia, i. e., Ymer. All giants and dwarfs drowned in the blood of Ymer except Bergelmer, with wife, children, and slaves, who escaped. Through these the race carried on an eternal war against the powers of light.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schiller's "Das Lied von der Glocke"; the different stages in the casting of the bell and the accompanying reflections represent the different stages in the growth of an individual.



They often forged weapons of murder for man and "by means of the alluring food of gold brought them into vice and destruction." This condition continued until Fridulf's son came and established altars to the glory of the God of Light and frightened the dwarfs back into the rivers and mountains. That is, Odin was recognized as the victor, although the divine power of darkness was still worshipped.

It is hardly necessary to observe that in the introductory epic material of the fragment we have nothing but Christian ideals in the garb of Norse mythology. Odin is virtually none other than Christ himself, or better, perhaps, the personification of what we call Christian ideals. This becomes still more evident as Nore's narrative goes on. According to a "ridiculous" saga, which originated in the "sacred palm-abode of India," Odin was to allow himself to be born of an earthly woman to redeem man. And now Svegger, who believes Odin to be his ancestor, has set out for the land of palms, olives, and sycamores to visit the God who has just been born of woman. In other words, Svegger is undertaking a pilgrimage across the Baltic to the Orient, which the poet supposes to be the cradle of both the Old Norse and the Christian religions.

Then commences the real dramatic action which is very brief. Nore knows about Svegger's journey and has sent Hild to entice him. His servant, Sindre, is watching upon the top of the mountain for the approach of the victim. Sindre arrives on the scene and announces the arrival of Svegger with a band of warriors. Then Hild enters; evidently she has already laid the snare, and she sets forth how a situation of that kind must always be met. The only means for darkness to overcome light is "the haven of a maiden." A glance, a voice, will "disarm the whole power of the sun and allure the regents of the stars down from their thrones to an effeminate rest on a bed of flowers."

Here the fragment ends, and there is very little more that can be said about it. It is another illustration of a Romanticist's unsuccessful attempt to dramatize a saga theme. But this much must be said: there is a wealth of meaning hidden in the original source and it would have proved interesting to

see how Stagnelius really intended to formulate the drama as a whole.

Dramatically, "Svegder" was not a success, even as far as it went; and probably could not have been, if completed. The internal meaning was more suitable for an epic than a drama, and there was not enough material in the original for a complex, well-developed plot. It was merely an episode and the hero, who is a tool of cruel fate, is practically ensnared at the beginning of the drama. There is no more to develop. Then, too, a pretentious scheme, where woman was to be the tool and unconquerable emissary of the powers of darkness, could hardly prove an agreeable dramatic topic in this case. It was based, it seems, on personal opinions which were too severe and pessimistic.

## CHAPTER V

### NICANDER AND BESKOW: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE AGE OF TRANSITION FROM NORSE HEATHENDOM TO CHRISTIANITY, AS REFLECTED IN THE ROMANTIC DRAMAS OF THESE TWO MEN.

"Det går så alltid, att det gamla, torra,  
Skall lemna rummet åt det unga, friska."  
Oldur in "Runesvärdet."

"There is no literary amalgamation of Romantic and viking elements during the Swedish Romantic period that makes more fascinating reading than "The Runesword and the First Knight" (*Runesvärdet och den förste riddaren*) by Karl August Nicander. "The Runesword," a tragedy in four acts, is written in pentameter and appeared in 1821 when the author was but twenty-one years old. The freshness, the remarkable imagery, the imagination and the originality displayed in the drama won even Tegnér's hearty admiration. At first we find a pleasing variety; full descriptions of scenery and stage directions, lyrical passages, a saga in prose, a mixture of monks and warriors in the list of *dramatis personae*, as well as an archbishop, a king, a ghost, and a champion, presumably heathen, with the ominous name of Orm (serpent). On closer inspection we find strong dialogs, sublime monologs, a miracle, a devil disguised as a monk, and an old doubting weakling, who attributes the failure of his crops to his recent conversion. The unities are disregarded; the action covers a period of over "three hundred days," the tragedy is localized in the vicinity of Björkö and Adelsö in Sweden, but the scenes are shifted frequently, and within the same act. We can hardly speak of any unity of action, for there are too many important characters in the limelight, and Alrik, "the first knight," is too impetuous and vacillating, and his most dramatic maneuvers are determined too much by external circumstances to warrant the

name of a strong tragic hero. Often peasants are introduced to demonstrate the prevalent division of sympathy between the old gods and the new God, and, as in Act II, sc. 2, to show admiration and faith in their leader, the nominal heathen but potential Christian Alrik. The nature-setting throughout is picturesque and impressive, never too gaudy, and the opening scene would do justice to a grand opera. Several scenes are laid at sunset or at the dead of night, amid lamps, lanterns, torches and thunder and lightning, and offset by mental disturbances in the souls of the old, confirmed pagans or the recently converted Christians. An actual or assumed intolerance and violence on the part of the monks, and the spasmodic berserker-rage of Alrik alternate with scenes of the deepest melancholy, based on an extreme Catholic system of religious thought.

There could hardly be a tragic theme more Romantic, dramatic, and inexhaustible than the conflict between a medieval Christian and a Norse heathen. Oehlenschläger had already treated the same theme in "Hakon Jarl," in 1807, and in a letter to M. v. Schwerin, dated in Lund, October 4, 1821, Tegnér writes: "Several years ago I commenced a 'Blotsven,' which was to represent the severe struggle between Christianity and heathenism. A glorious theme: the decrepit Asas who stand sponsors at the baptism of the North!"<sup>1</sup> But Tegnér knew he was no dramatist and, according to this letter, threw both Asas and monks into the stove. Nicander, however, had better success with the theme.

At the opening of the first act, a dragon ship is sailing by in the distance, at sunset, with singing vikings upon it, and Oldur is seen in the foreground, on the shore, grinding his sword and lamenting the degeneration of the viking. Led by Peregrinus, a band of Christian catechumens arrives: Oldur refuses to respect the cross and is ordered to be bound when his son, Alrik, rushes in with drawn sword and "eagle-helmet" upon his head and rescues his aged father. In a strong and solemn dialog on a funeral mound, Alrik takes the fateful vow to slay that one of his race who first forsakes his ancestral belief. With much skill Nicander contrasts here viking deeds

<sup>1</sup> Jubelfestupplaga, V, p. 233.

and clash of arms with the "effeminate children-songs," "black books," and "white women's-clothes" of the monks. An old man and recent convert, Edmund, appears to protest against the new confession; all prosperity has left him since he changed his faith; he stands now as a victim of two angry divine powers; twelve nights of song and prayer have been of no avail, and his Christian daughter has become as "pale as the flowers" on his meadow. Bishop Ansgarius, who is present, points with kindness, comfort, and piety to the land above; Edmund is convinced, rather too easily, of his mistake and the crowd disperses in the darkness. Then comes one of the remarkable monologs in the tragedy. Peregrinus appears with a torch and divulges in strophes of "gloomy beauty"<sup>1</sup> and demonic power his true character. He is a devil sent to earth to "destroy the cross" and incite hatred between the contending factions. Then, from a Romantic brimstone atmosphere of sighs, tears, and genuinely satanic reflections the scene is shifted to Edmund's peaceful dwelling. Here the pagan Alrik takes farewell of his betrothed Hulda, Edmund's daughter, who is a super-devout Christian. After Alrik's departure, Hulda upbraids herself to her father for a "criminal" love, over-emphasizes a guilt which is mere imagination in the first place, deems herself the cause of her father's misfortune, and, finally, father and daughter decide to make a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre to win peace for their souls.

In the meantime, Peregrinus has been faithful to his satanic mission. In the beginning of the second act, a temple has been burned and the whole city barely rescued from the flames. Shortly afterwards a woman appears carrying a dead child in her arms, and we are given to understand that a monk had baptized it to death by order of the Bishop (Ansgarius). Both crimes are the work of Peregrinus, of course, and the impulsive Alrik, supported by a large group of followers, is determined to restore the religion of their forefathers. The angry populace is pacified temporarily, however, by Folke Lagman, in whom Nicander has attempted to create an ideal, though somewhat modern, type of the viking lawyer and judge.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. D. af Wirsén: *Lefnadsteckningar*, Stockholm, 1901, p. 185.

Folke is the embodiment of wisdom, and in clear and splendid language urges caution, deliberation, and justice. Crime cannot be cured by crime—a modern idea—is Folke's principle.

"Ju längre molnet skockar sig och svartnar,  
Dess starkare blir thordön, då den kommer.<sup>1</sup>

Alrik is sitting on a stone below a chapel. Ansgarius comes out and Alrik raises his sword above the Bishop, when the mother with the dead child appears, and the would-be assassin checks himself and withdraws. The woman's abusive attacks on the Bishop are repaid with kindness and a miracle takes place when Ansgarius places his hand on the child's head; the child opens his eyes and lives to the intense astonishment of both. Alrik has been a distant witness of the dramatic miracle and is deeply affected, but strangely enough our viking Hamlet rushes into Oldur's dwelling soon thereafter, determined to save the grandchildren from later conversion by immediate slaughter. Still more mysteriously he believes he can carry out the provisions of his horrible oath by such a murder. The only possible explanation for his attitude is an inner despair, akin to madness, occasioned by a full realization of his own wavering condition. He does not carry out his dastardly plan and begs his father to take back the runesword. This Oldur refuses to do, reminding him of his fatal oath.

The ten scenes of the third act prepare the way for Alrik's formal conversion and for the Thing which is to decide the fate of the Christians. The monk, Clemens, teacher of Alrik, is accosted by some heathen warriors and forced to give up his Bible. The old Norsemen are struck by the "mysterious book," easily interpret its illustrations in terms of their own religion and decide to retain the book as evidence against the Christians. In the second and third scene between Oldur and Folke, and between the father and the son, we learn something about the mental struggles of Alrik, but not enough,<sup>2</sup> so that the hero's sudden enthusiasm for Christianity later seems un-

<sup>1</sup> "The longer the clouds gather and darken, the more violent is the thunder when it comes." See Sc. 3. Nicander: *Samlade arbeten*. Tredje upplagan. Senare delen, pp. 347-48. All references are to this edition.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wirsén, as above, p. 187.

natural, even if he has never been a very strong heathen. The fourth scene shows the danger of the Christian missionaries, and Clemens urges Ansgarius, of course in vain, to flee before the coming Thing is held. In scene 7 we see Clemens and Alrik on a "dark night" zealously studying the Bible in Edmund's desolated home at Adelsö. Edmund himself comes back from his pilgrimage with a message from his dying daughter, Alrik rushes out, and in his anguish is about to kill himself when Hulda's ghost appears and entreats her former lover to be baptized. At sunrise Alrik is a Christian convert.

Tegnér liked the last act best.<sup>1</sup> It has more of the necessary dramatic unity and concentration than the remainder of the tragedy, and the modern biographer Wirsén rightly characterizes the opening farewell monolog, where Alrik buries his viking armor and sword, as one of "almost sublime power."<sup>2</sup> Peregrinus has been a silent spectator at the burial of Alrik's weapons. He urges Orm, who is of Alrik's stature, to dig up and don the armor and, thus disguised as Alrik, and prompted by Peregrinus, to fight against the Christians. Orm, who has an almost humorous turn of mind, is ready to *do* anything, provided he does not have to *think*.<sup>3</sup> The next few scenes take place in a chapel after midnight, when Alrik is baptized by Ansgarius, gets other armor from the Bishop, and becomes a knight of the cross. Finally, in the last three scenes we have the Thing in the open air. King Olof is present and testimonies are heard. All atrocities attributed to the Christians point to one man, but he has escaped, a rather cowardly and unnecessary trick for a devil to play, for the one perpetrator is, of course, Peregrinus. Upon the suggestion of a wise peasant, the question of guilt is to be decided in mortal combat between two representatives. Naturally Alrik becomes the champion of the Christians, and Orm, with Alrik's armor and runesword, of the heathen and the gods of Valhalla. In the encounter Orm is killed, Oldur picks up the sword, discovers

<sup>1</sup> Cf. letter to M. v. Schwerin of April 1, 1821. Jubelfestupplaga, V, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> Lefnadsteckningar, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> Sc. 2, p. 419.

the adversary to be his son Alrik, pierces himself and is about to rush at Alrik, when the latter announces that he has already been fatally wounded; the runesword had performed its mission.

The sources of this plot are not very extensive. Wirsén points out that we must not expect to find local color or believe that "The Runesword" gives any pronounced *Kulturbild*.<sup>1</sup> Nicander's studies or knowledge of human life cannot have been very comprehensive at his age, and this may account for the lack of firmness in some characters. But we are wrong to suppose that there is no approximation to historical truth in "The Runesword." Nicander localizes his tragedy at Björkö, puts the time at "about 850," and introduces King Olof and Archbishop Ansgarius (Anskar). Now both of these are actual historical personages; they lived "about 850" on or in the vicinity of the island of Björkö, which is situated about eighteen English miles west of Stockholm; and many other features of the tragedy have, apparently, a more definite historical setting than is ordinarily supposed. The historical "Apostle of the North" remained two winters at Birka, a prominent port on Björkö in Lake Mälär, on his first missionary trip to Germany in 831 A. D., "in order to report progress to the emperor."<sup>2</sup> "Anskar, whose personal interest in the mission (i. e., in Sweden) still continued, came again to Sweden in 848 A. D., in the time of a king called Olof, and remained for about the same time as before."<sup>3</sup> This was two years, which would put the end of his second stay at "about 850," the date set for the drama. Edmund's complaint in Act I, sc. 4, that the old gods were probably angry with him for being converted, seems to be more than a mere brainstorm, historically, and the same is true of the introduction of King Eric's image in Act II, scenes 1 and 2. The Bishop of Salisbury, in his recent lectures on "The National Church in Sweden," writes, with respect to Anskar's second visit to Sweden: "Complaint was made that the (heathen) gods were angry because their

<sup>1</sup> Lefnadsteckningar, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, The National Church of Sweden (The Hale Lectures, 1910), London and Oxford, England, and Milwaukee, U. S. A., 1911, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 54.



sacrifices were neglected; and an enthusiast came forward to announce a vision which he had received from the gods forbidding the people to deify their late king, Eric."<sup>1</sup> And there is historical justification for the Thing in the last act of "The Runesword," for Bishop Wordsworth goes on to say: "On Anskar's (second) arrival the king and his nobles determined to ask counsel of the gods as to whether the mission should be encouraged or not. . . . On this occasion it (the consultation, by lot, with the gods,) was favorable to Anskar. After this the question was put before two public assemblies, probably one at Birka and one at Uppsala."<sup>2</sup> The historical Anskar was as saintly and fearless as Nicander depicts him and we may well imagine him in such a danger as the monk Clemens describes in Act III, scenes 4-5, even in Sweden. Anskar had to flee for his life in 845, when the Northmen, under King Eric, plundered Hamburg. That the old vikings were especially fond of telling stories, as Oldur does to his grandchildren in Act II, sc. 7, is historically correct. That pilgrimages to the holy land were taken, as in the case of Edmund and his daughter, is mentioned in the saga literature by Snorre Sturleson, such as the saga of Sigurd Jorsalafarare. Nicander did well to localize his drama on Björkö; such grave-mounds as are mentioned in it, and on one of which Alrik takes his fatal vow, are said to be extremely numerous on Björkö to this day.

It is tolerably clear that Nicander had already studied Old Norse history to a considerable extent when he wrote "The Runesword," but it is difficult to name his actual sources. We may say that all the sagas which Nicander had read contributed to the setting of the tragedy, and out of the composite material the poet created his types, chose his environment, and invented his plot. As far as I know, no other characters in "The Runesword" have definite historical prototypes than those mentioned. Beyond these we have to accept the author's words in the dedication:

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

Ur inga böcker jag mitt ämne hämtat,  
 All verdslig sanning har jag här forsakat ,  
 Och endast sökt det andeligen sanna.<sup>1</sup>

One might expect from this dedication, which commences with the beginning of St. John's Gospel and is dedicated to Almighty God himself, that the tragedy was to show the victory of Christianity over paganism. Nicander says: "But the word of the Lord was triumphant."<sup>2</sup> In the development of his drama, however, his sympathy for the rough and ready Norseman is so striking as to become a mild glorification of vikingism, and, to my mind, he succeeds best in the portrayal of the viking element. And that a Scandinavian youth of twenty-one should be thus inclined is natural. The tone of "The Rune-sword" becomes almost didactic; the reader must feel the underlying plea for tolerance toward the old religion of the Northmen. Nicander seems to say—and it could not be wholly unconscious—that religion, per se, is deeper than either Christianity or Valhalla worship. Consequently the main difference was not so large, after all, and was largely one of interpretation. To the heathen warrior in Act III, sc. 1, many illustrations in Clemens's Bible fit surprisingly well into his own religious conceptions. He opens the book and exclaims, in part:

Här står ju Brage sjelf med gyllne harpan;  
 Der Thor, med portarna vid Jotunhem  
 På ryggen; se, der har han Midgårdsormen,  
 Vill slita upp dess gap med gudastyrka.  
 Nu kommer Valhalls sal, så hög och präktig;  
 Der ser man ljusastakan stå på bordet  
 Med gyllne armar jemte mjödets kärl,  
 Och Oden sjelf, i djupa tankar sänkt,  
 I gullskrud och med bröstlapp, höljd af perlor, . . . <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I have not taken my theme from any books, I have renounced all worldly truth here, and only sought the spiritually true."

<sup>2</sup> See dedication, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup> "Why here stands Brage himself with the golden harp: there Thor with the gates of Jotunheim upon his back; behold, there he has the Midgard-Serpent, and is about to tear open his jaws with the strength of a god. Now comes the hall of Valhalla, so high and splendid: there one sees the candlestick stand on the table with golden arms, together with the vessel for the mead, and Odin himself in deep thought in golden garments, and with breast-protector, adorned with pearls." See p. 376.

And further :

Se Balder, hvar han ligger blek och död,  
Och Nanna står vid båren stum och gråter,  
Mig tyckes verlden död; så tyst och kalt  
Är allt omkring den fallna gudasonen.<sup>1</sup>

The last scene has a broad-minded tone of equality and reconciliation which may be taken as the teaching of the tragedy. With genuine sympathy for ancestral worship, expressed in a beautiful language with a poetico-Romantic conception of spirits meeting after death, King Olof voices the sentiments of the poet in these verses :

Jag reder Far och Son två skilda högar:  
Planterar korset uppå Alriks graf;  
Jag detta svärd vill på den andra sätta.  
Helt nära de bredvid hvarandra hvile,  
Att deras vålnader i stjernenatten  
Må, sittande på hvar sin egen hög,  
Hvarandra handen räcka till försoning.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to observe the style and dramatic technic of "The Runesword." The meter is almost perfect, for Nicander had a good feeling for form, and the language is clear and simple. Even ghost-scenes are objectively portrayed. Rime is frequently employed—a characteristic which is incompatible with the Old Norse theme<sup>3</sup>—and the style betokens the mind of a genius. The tragedy is rather long to be put on the stage; in its original form, in the third edition of Nicander's works, it covers 159 octavo pages of actual drama, and a condensation would, I believe, spoil its beauty. As far as I have been able to determine, no attempt has been made to play "The Rune-

<sup>1</sup> "Behold Balder, where he lies pale and dead, and Nanna stands silent beside the bier and weeps. The world seemeth dead to me: so quiet and so cold is everything around the fallen son of god" (meaning to the viking, son of a god, or any god).

<sup>2</sup> "I will prepare two separate mounds for father and son (Oldur and Alrik); plant the cross upon Alrik's grave; and place this sword upon the other. May they rest right close to one another so that their ghosts, sitting upon their respective mounds in the starlit night, may extend their hands to one another for reconciliation."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wirsén: *Lefnadsteckningar*, p. 191.

sword," and one reason must be its lack of sufficient concentration. But it has numerous genuinely dramatic parts, plenty of action, and with its setting and tragic effects should furnish an excellent basis for a grand opera. Poor motivation prevents a strongly knit dramatic structure of the work as a whole. Oldur's hatred of the monks is motivated, in part, by personal reasons, and he is, therefore, not attached to paganism with strong enough bonds. That Alrik and his betrothed should have to part seems absurd, even to an extreme ascetic Christian. Both contemporary<sup>1</sup> and later<sup>1</sup> critics have applied the Shakespearean standard of motivation to Alrik in "The Runesword" with much severity. And rightly so, if we have the right to apply such standards at all, in this case. The conversion of the new Hamlet is determined by the appearance of a real ghost, and his death brought about by what seems almost like mere chance, and in reality is the work of Peregrinus. But, for what Nicander undoubtedly intended, the motivation is better than one might suppose at first. After Alrik's fatal vow, which he makes with a tragic impulsiveness, the vow takes care of itself and the real hero after that is the runesword itself. We have here a kind of fate-tragedy, half Greek and half Werneian, where an incomprehensible something guides a mechanical instrument until it has concluded its tragic mission. And then, also, as Wirsén points out,<sup>2</sup> the old sagas often attributed an independent, mysterious power to swords. From a strictly dramatic viewpoint, the interference of supernatural charac-

<sup>1</sup> I refer in particular to the enthusiastic recension of the tragedy in *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* for 1821, Nos. 17 and 18. This review, now known to have been written by Palmblad, was formerly attributed to Atterbom and is printed in *Atterbom: Literära karakteristiker* (Vol. 7 of *Samlade skrifter*, Örebro, 1870), pp. 282ff. By the modern critic I refer to Wirsén: Cf. *Lefnadsteckningar*, pp. 189-90. In the above review, Palmblad criticizes the whole invention of Peregrinus, whom he calls a "stupid devil," as interfering with the free will and individuality of the hero. Palmblad also queries whether Nicander should have allowed the monks to attack Oldur, for the missionaries were in enough danger as it was. Again Palmblad does not believe that Anskar had an armor, for he was already bishop when he came to Sweden. Cf. review, p. 291. Yet the reviewer admits he had not read this tragedy without tears, p. 286. Palmblad mentions Oldur's personal reasons for his hatred of the monks.

<sup>2</sup> *Lefnadsteckningar*, p. 189.

ters, however, such as the weak but interesting devil Peregrinus, is, I presume, a technical fault.

But we have to analyze "The Runesword" as it *is*, and not as unrelenting critics think it *ought* to be. We are not dealing with a stereotyped Shakesperian drama but with a lyrico-Romantic tragedy, with epic breadth and examples of some really good poetry. "The Runesword" is a Romantic version of a composite saga, where the two important constituents are the Romantic and the saga element. It remains for us to examine these two constituents.

Wirsén declares that Nicander did not belong to the New School;<sup>1</sup> Tegnér says he did,<sup>2</sup> and that he had many of the "bad habits and oddities" of the New Movement. It all depends on the meaning one attaches to the phrase "New School." If by the New School we mean the more narrow, militant circle of the Fosforists, then Wirsén is right; for Nicander was not a formally enrolled member of *any* school when "The Runesword" was written. But as soon as we penetrate below the surface of the matter we shall have to stamp "The Runesword" as a Romantic product, even in the restricted sense. Nor do I base the claim upon the fact that Nicander contributed to the Fosforistic organ *Poetisk Kalender*.<sup>3</sup> Wirsén himself has to admit at least temporary "influences of a new-Romantic conception,"<sup>4</sup> and calls Edmund "a complete new-Romantic creation, unintelligible in his fantasticalness, his weakness, his insanity, and unfortunately, also, in his piety."<sup>5</sup> "But," Wirsén goes on to say, "such a disease was a part of the new-Romantic temper," and then ascribes this characteristic of the "melodramatic" and "medieval" portrayal of "hoary antiquity" to the influence of Fouqué. Tegnér, in his important letter to

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to M. v. Schwerin of April 1, 1821. Jubelfestupplaga, V, p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> Wirsén attributes the "misconception" of regarding Nicander as a member of the New School to the fact that he contributed a poem to *Poetisk Kalender*. The poem in question was "Song of Loyalty" (Trohets-Sång), inserted in the *Kalender* for 1820, p. 211. Cf. Lefnadsteckningar, p. 193, and note.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

Nicander himself,<sup>1</sup> criticises "die romantische Breite," which represented an epic rather than an action, prevented concentration, and was a mirror rather than a focus of history. Then, too, he objected to the mysticism—in this case synonymous with the supernatural—which, with its "misty and hollow-eyed forms," had always been repulsive to him. And, indeed, the tragedy has an extensive Romantic pot-pourri of miracles, medieval conversions, ghosts, tears, forebodings, longing, superstition, feeling, "indescribable anxiety," and *Stimmungen*. Hulda is as much of a Romantic product as her father, only worse. With her, religion has become a fatal disease, and her mystic reflections on the cross and the Holy Virgin remind one of Brentano's Catholicizing "Rosenkranz." There is no Fosseforistic obscurantism in "The Runesword," but many words and expressions remind one of the New School; such as: liljeklockan (the lily-clock); evighetens rosenverld (the rose-world of eternity); Guds renhets sinnebild (the symbol of God's purity); rosenbindel (rose-bandage); Gudars silverport (the silver-gate of the gods); evighetens rosenband (the rose-band of eternity); silfvergians (silver-luster); silfverkulle (silver-hillock); and liljekinder (lily-cheeks).<sup>2</sup> The night and the moon<sup>3</sup> play a prominent rôle in "The Runesword" and envelop the action in a semi-fantastic, Romantic haze à la Tieck. Edmund says: "The time of my wanderings is at night, when darkness comes from the sea, and spreads its mantle over the island, and conceals my misery."<sup>4</sup> Nicander employs at times a Southern verse-form, the ottave-rime, in "The Runesword," another mechanical feature common to the program-makers of the new movement. And lastly, the fact itself that the tragedy is poetical and lyrical rather than strictly dramatic, points towards a new-Romantic relationship.

I have already stated<sup>5</sup> that Nicander was most successful in the portrayal of the saga element, and this because the drama-

<sup>1</sup> Letter of February 9, 1827. Jubelfestupplaga, VI, pp. 68-71.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Arbeten, pp. 313, 320, 323, 324, 350, 354, 406, and 408, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Arbeten, pp. 321, 323, 324, 325, 328, 329, 374, 409, and 410.

<sup>4</sup> Act I, sc. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. above in this chapter, p. 151.

tist, better than any other, felt the tragic sympathy which should lie with the heathen in this case. The result is that Alrik is best as a pagan, or when he shows viking tendencies, and his father Oldur Silverbeard, is the most masterfully drawn character. But the viking characteristics, in either case, are of a merely general type and Oldur has but few individual traits. Oldur is an idealized composite image of the saga age, as Nican-der imagined it from his necessarily limited reading. The "beautiful viking life," "a song upon the sea," the "faithful sword," and the conception that a "life full of exploits is more beautiful than death," enter into the program of any heathen pirate, and so it does into Oldur's.<sup>1</sup> As a youth he was a man of action who could oppose ten<sup>2</sup> in combat, and who in his old age regrets that his sword is rusty with old blood and can draw no new. Oldur evinces the traditional Northern defiance of death: "Slay me," he tells Peregrinus in Act I, scene 2, "then you can seat yourself on my body and sing the song of ravens and plunder unhampered." Throughout the drama he remains the respected, inflexible champion of the old Scandinavian gods and at the end dies on the runesword by his own hand, as a viking should if not killed in battle. "It is better to die in work or action than to go to sleep on the death-bed under a roof," exclaims Oldur in Act II, sc. 2. For him the age of combat and victory, when the song and "the magic staff of the saga," refreshed the warrior for new exploits, was the glorious period.<sup>3</sup> In his invocation to his son in Act I, sc. 3, there comes a plea for the "clang of swords" at the funeral-mounds of his forefathers, for the "saga traditions," for the "godlike" unity of will and power, deed and council in life, and for the inheritance of manliness and the "golden runes of Odin." Again, in Act II, sc. 8, he advises Alrik: "but above all, tread the righteous path of the gods and observe the wise judgments of the norms." Oldur is a man of experience, not only in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Act I, sc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Act I, sc. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Act IV, sc. 9. The combination of song and battle is also represented by the First Peasant in Act IV, sc. 7. He says: "A blow upon the shield and a grip about the sword produce a glorious harmony with the song of the shield; they give weight and power to what is spoken."

deeds, which might be true of any Norseman, but also in higher culture. He urges Folke, Act II, sc. 2, to give him the captured Christian Bible, for he claims a good knowledge of the "signs of the runes and other symbols." He is a lover of freedom—nothing could be more true of the pagan sea-rovers—and in the same scene (Act II, sc. 2) he says to Folke: "We must act as free men." Again at the end of the same dialog, he boldly and resolutely expresses preference for immediate action, for "war with the tongue is not the art of the Sviars (Swedes)." The old saga-heroes, in their escapades, were, of course, candid and fearless, often horribly so, and were seldom touched by the ordinary phenomena of life. Such is Oldur, and yet he rends his clothes (Act II, sc. 8) when Alrik is about to murder his grandchildren and justly exclaims: "Oh, woe, what horror! My son a wolf, my house a den of murders." In other words, there is a trace of sympathy for the defenseless kinsman, though the nature of the drama excludes a well-rounded picture of viking loyalty among kindred folk. Neither are there any adventurous dealings with women, in "The Runesword," showing the traditional Norse respect for and protection of, the weaker sex: for, the real representative Oldur is only a retired viking, too old to engage in a *Brautfahrt*. He is, like Götz v. Berlichingen, the victim of an advancing civilization for which he has the greatest contempt, but, unlike Götz, is too old to wage war against the new ideas. But the viking sturdiness, wisdom and brevity of speech still remain. His language is often figurative, always forceful. Compare, for instance, Oldur's appeal to the multitude, which Nicander means to be typical:

Lång sömnen var: Tid är att vakna, Männer!  
 Mig tyckes se, hur stridens unga örn  
 Sin starka ram kring edra hjertan spänner,  
 Och modet reser sig som vårens björn.  
 Upp! reten den mot frihetens ovänner,  
 Som kommit hit från världens södra hörn.

(Act II, sc. 2)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The sleep was long: It is time to awake, men! Methinks I see how the young eagle of combat embraces your hearts with its strong claw and courage springs up like the bear in spring. Up! rouse him against the



Further, Oldur, true to Old Norse convictions, believes in the divine sanction and guidance of warriors on the battle-field. In this same scene he incites his heroes to action by these words: "You still have sword, helmet and shield; All-father himself goes with you to battle. Illusion shall yield. The eye of Odin radiates light and truth from on high." Storm and the sea are Oldur's elements;<sup>1</sup> and last, but not least, for our purpose, Oldur is a Romantic personification of loyalty to fatherland-traditions and enthusiasm for the saga age. For him the traditions of the past are sacred; he tells his grandchild:

Ett säger jag: hvad som af ålder varit,  
Är heligt, barn! må ingen gäcka det!"<sup>2</sup>

None of the gruesome murder, plunder, or burning, attributed to the viking marauders, is perpetrated in "The Runesword" by the pagans. The nearest we have to it is that powerful scene (II, 8) between Alrik, Oldur, and the grandchildren. There is somewhat unnatural, it seems to me; though but a child, he has the same utter disdain for death as a veteran fighter. He would willingly die, provided the fatal blow is not made in wrath; he is willing to die in combat but not to be butchered. In this scene, however, Alrik becomes, potentially, a wild and cruel berserk and champion of the old religion; he would slay the youngsters while they are still able to enumerate the old gods and because "innocent blood is agreeable to the Asas." "To-night I am your true image," he ejaculates to his father, "I want blood, and in that the wolf-ancestry of the wolf is recognized."<sup>3</sup> He draws his sword and addresses his young nephews:

Knäböjen, barn! nu vandren I till Oden.  
Jag ser, ni bäfven ej för sista resan.  
Friskt mod, ren blick ännu I dödens timma,

enemies of freedom who have come hither from the Southern corner of the world."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Oldur's words to his son in Act III, sc. 3: "Wind was my delight in my younger days."

<sup>2</sup> Act II, sc. 7. "One thing I say: whatever has existed in the past is sacred, child! May no one ridicule it!"

<sup>3</sup> See edition, as in note 1, p. 147, p. 369.

Och upprätt hufvud, karlafärg på kinden:  
 Det är en Svears sed att så se ut.  
 Vak upp i Valhall, öppna silfverporten!  
 Två gudabarn dig gästa, store Oden!<sup>1</sup>

Critics have assumed an influence of Fouqué and Oehlenschläger on "The Runesword."<sup>2</sup> Fouqué was much admired in Uppsala about 1820, and his themes from Norse mythology were undoubtedly well known. "Sintram und seine Gefährten," based on a Northern saga, had appeared in 1814; "Die Fahrten Thiodulfs des Isländers," in 1815; and "Sigurd der Schlangentödtter" as early as 1808. Several translations from Fouqué had been made also during the second decade of the century. I find in Sondén's edition of "Svenska vitterheten"<sup>3</sup> by Hammar skjöld that some of Fouqué's novels were translated into Swedish in 1816 by a B. J. Törneblad, "Undine" in 1819, and "Eginhard und Emma" by G. Schentz in 1817. There is no doubt, then, that Fouqué was studied in Sweden about this time. Atterbom and Livijn knew him well. But his direct influence on Nicander cannot be determined with any certainty and was probably only of a general character. The Gothic tendencies had already a firm foothold in Sweden, and so Fouqué could, in this particular, at the most, only intensify an impulse which already existed. But the influence of mediævalism is probable. There are some striking similarities also in the internal plan and conceptions between "The Runesword" and "Thiodulf des Isländers." The setting in both cases is at the dawn of Christianity, the hero Thiodulf wavers between Christ and Odin much as Alrik does, and in the end is baptized and becomes a Christian. Then we have also the same broad-minded fundamentals in Fouqué's novel as in Nicander's trag-

<sup>1</sup> "Kneel, children. Now you travel to Odin. I see that you do not fear the last journey. Fresh courage, clear vision, even in the moment of death, and head upright, with manly color on your cheeks; it is the custom of Svears to have that expression. Wake up in Valhalla, open the silver-gate! Two god-like children will be your guests, great Odin!"

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 13. Wirsén: *Lefnadsteckningar*, p. 190. Cf. also Henrik Schück och Karl Warburg: *Illustrerad svensk-litteraturhistoria*, II, p. 757.

<sup>3</sup> See list of Bibliography.

edy: that the difference between the two contending religions was one merely of interpretation and that, as such, the two might well exist side by side. Both are a plea for sympathy with the saga-period, its religion, and people.

More plausible, to me, is the influence of Oehlenschläger on "The Runesword." Oehlenschläger had more of the viking in him than Nicander and had already treated the same theme dramatically, at least twice. "Hakon Jarl" (1805) and "Palnatoke," written in Paris in 1807 and published and played two years later, both depict the struggle between Norse paganism and Christianity, and the heroes are, in both cases, champions of the gods of Valhalla. Hakon and Palnatoke both die, like Alrik, by the hand of another, and in "Palnatoke" as in "The Runesword," fate guiding another's hand kills the hero. Hakon dies at his own request like a viking, pierced by Karker's spear, and, similarly, Oldur in "The Runesword" dies voluntarily, though by his own hand. "Hakon Jarl" has a treacherous emissary, Thorer, who corresponds somewhat to the satanic emissary Peregrinus in "The Runesword." In the last part of the drama Hakon Jarl is as zealous a champion of the Old Norse ideals and religion as Oldur, and there is a supernatural element in both works. In "Hakon Jarl" Auden (Odin) himself appears and explains his cult to Olof Tryggvason, showing a difference of interpretation of religion—as Nicander proposed to show—due to climatic conditions.<sup>1</sup> The ideal heathen, as pictured in "Palnatoke," appears again in Oldur; he means what he says and never retracts a word. In "Palnatoke" we have a Christian bishop Popo who speaks of a miracle; in "The Runesword" we have Bishop Anskar who performs one.

It will be in order here to mention another, more definite phase of Nicander's interest in the saga element. On the 30th of April, 1822, Nicander was elected to membership in the Gothic Förbund. He proved to be of more than usually good

<sup>1</sup> The influence of Montesquieu and also of Rousseau is more marked in the Danish dramatist than in Nicander. Snorre Sturleson mentions in the saga of Olof Tryggvason, Chap. 71, that Odin visited Olof, but there is no mention made of any religious discussion.

Gothic material and seemed to be the only one of its members who took the prescribed inauguration paper seriously. Many of the "Goths" were utterly ignorant of Old Norse affairs—as is shown in the superficial characterizations of their ancestral namesakes—but Nicander, as Norna-Gest in the Gothic Society, gave a beautiful and intelligent biography of the semi-historical skald and warrior Norna-Gest, especially as guest (Gest) of Olof Tryggvason.<sup>1</sup> The biography is very enthusiastic and effective, simple yet rhetorical, solemn and dignified, sane and in excellent language. Here, then, Nicander took an exhaustive interest in a definite saga, that of Norna-Gest.

The Norna-Gest Saga was the inspiration also of one of Nicander's early poems, called "Norna-Gest." It is divided into three parts: "The Arrival of the Guest" (Gästen kommer); "The Fighting of the Drunkards in the Hall" (De drucknas strid i salen); and "The Power of the Harp" (Harpans makt). Only the setting is taken from the original and the development of the theme is almost wholly an invention of the poet. But there is an echo of saga-historical truth in the first part. The last line of every stanza is: "Den gamle lyster hvila" (the old man desires to rest); and the original saga tells us that the king (Olof), on the first night, retired immediately after the arrival of the skald. The action of the last two parts is supposed to take place while the king is sleeping; the poet imagines Norna-Gest pacifying the fighting drunkards by playing his harp.

Nicander wrote many poems in a Gothic style, though not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hjærne: *Götiska förbundet*, pp. 139ff., where Nicander's paper is quoted in full. According to the saga, Norna-Gest (Guest-of-the-Norns) was early visited by the norns, the last one of which jealously prophesied that he should not live longer than until the light of his cradle had burned down. The light was then extinguished by the more friendly, oldest norn and given to the mother for safe-keeping. Later Norna-Gest hid it in his harp and came at an advanced age to the court of Olof Tryggvason. Here he sings of his deeds and of Sigurd and Brynhilda, and one day takes out the faded taper, lights it, and when it has burned down, dies. Cf. *Söguþáttir af Norna-Gesti*, in *Fornaldar Sögur Norðrlanda*. *Kaupmannahöfn*, 1829. *Fyrsta Bindi*, pp. 311-342. Chapters 11 and 12 deal with the youth and death of Norna-Gest. His death occurred at the age of "three hundred winters" (300 vetra).

always based on any one saga, and generally wrote them well. A splendid collection of sixteen national lyrics by Nicander, called "The Runes" (Runorna),<sup>1</sup> was read with much commendation in the Gothic Society 1823-1824. Many of these have a general coloring and a sprinkling of names from the Edda-literature. For the benefit of the ordinary reader, Nicander himself refers in a number of appended notes<sup>2</sup> to some of the specific sources employed. It appears upon closer examination and verification that Nicander often went to the Fornaldar Sögur and to Sturleson's Ynglinga Saga (Heimskringla) for his motifs. In the conversion of Arnliot Gellina<sup>3</sup> in the "rune" of the same name, which is taken from the Olof Haraldson Saga (Chap. 227) by Sturleson, the poet follows the original with unusual historical accuracy. In others, Nicander modifies the saga, or uses only a small part of it, to suit his fancy. "Reminiscence of Iceland" (Islands minne), on which Nicander has only a single historical note but no exact reference, is also taken from Sturleson's Heimskringla, chapters 43-47. It is based on the fate of Olof Wood-carver (Olof Trätälja), the last of the Ynglinga kings in Sweden and father of the Norwegian line of kings of the same dynasty. Now, according to the saga, (Chap. 47), King Olof was not zealous in sacrificing to the gods; the native Sviars did not like this, they believed him, therefore, responsible for the temporary famine, in reality due to over-population, captured him and burned him. Nicander makes Olof say: "I was burned in flames on account of my piety, much have I suffered, little am I known."<sup>4</sup> Although the poetic embellishments are Nicander's own invention, the motif for "Hjalmar's Bride" (Hjalmars brud) is taken from the last part of Chap. 5 of the Hervarar Saga,<sup>5</sup> and deals in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, Chapter III, p. 113, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> Samlade arbeten, Förra delen. Tredje upplagan, pp. 238ff.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 218ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 209 and 238. Cf. the following passages from Fornaldar Sögur, Fyrsta Bindi, p. 429: "Þessu næst tók Oddr Hjálmar, ok bar hann á skip út, ok flutti heim til Sviþjóðar, segjande þessi tiðendi konungi ok dóttur hans; fèkk henni svá mikels fall Hjálmars, at hun sprakk þegar af harmi, ok voru þau Hjálmar i einn haug laginn, ok drukkit erfi eptir þau." After Hjalmar had been fatally wounded, he commissioned Oddr to convey his last greetings to his betrothed Ingeborg, the king's daughter.

beautiful poetry with the betrothed maiden's fatal grief at seeing her lover's dead body. The Romantic idea of meeting her lover in death is also present. One "rune" is suggested by the above-mentioned *Norna-Gest Saga* and bears the title "*Norna-Gest as a Young Man*" (*Norna-Gest som yngling*). It is an autobiographical reflection on the poet's calling, reward, and death. For his powerful and didactic "rune"—preaching fearlessness and patriotism—on that ideal Norse spokesman of the law *Lagman Thorgny*, *Nicander* mentions *Sturleson* as his authority in the first stanza.<sup>1</sup> "*Bjarkamal*" is a didactic application of an incident in the *Sorle Saga*.<sup>2</sup> *Hogne*, a Swede, and *Sorle*, a Norwegian, are engaged in mortal combat. Neither will give in. *Sorle* in a ditch, disarmed, promises to lie still until *Hogne*, who has thrown away his sword temporarily, gets his weapon to slay his adversary. This extreme courage moves *Hogne*; they extend the hand of friendship, for unity gives strength, and thus, instead of one defeating the other, they win each other over. The original saga tells (Chap. 26) how they later married each the other's sister.

In a letter to C. P. Hagberg, dated December 30, 1824,<sup>3</sup> *Tegnér* expressed the opinion that "*The Runes*" were of sufficient value to be considered by the Swedish Academy in the award of the *Lundblad* prize. *Tegnér* anticipated the result of the contest, however, by entertaining the conviction that the Academy had a prejudice against *Nicander* for not living up to his reputation, or even *Tegnér's* expectations.<sup>4</sup> *Nicander* re-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. as in note 2 on preceding page, p. 202.

Ljud sång! om Thorgny Lagman väl;  
Om riket var han mån.  
Han var en man till kropp och själ,  
Det säger Sturleson.

Cf. *Olof Haraldson Saga*, Chap. 79–81.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Sörta Saga Sterka*, Chap. 25, in *Fornaldar Sögur, Þridja Bind. Kaupmannahöfn*, 1830, pp. 408ff. For *Nicander's* poem, cf. as in note 2 on preceding page, p. 228, and note on the same, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> *Jubelfestupplaga*, V, pp. 411–12.

<sup>4</sup> *Tegnér* set great hopes on "*The Runesword*." He writes, April 1, 1821 (see *Jubelfestupplaga*, V, p. 223), that it was "without exception the most ingenious tragedy we have in Swedish up to the present time." As a dramatist, however, *Nicander* never equalled his youthful production.

jeemed himself somewhat, however, in 1825, when he was awarded the Academy's second prize for his "Gothic" poem "The Feeling of Patriotism" (*Fosterlandskänslan*), and captured the highest award for "Tasso's Death" (*Tassos död*) in 1826.

From the year 1820 dates the conception of another lyrico-Romantic mingling of medievalism and a viking element; "Hildegard" by Bernhard v. Beskow. "Hildegard," which is a five-act tragedy in blank verse, appeared in 1836 in Part I of "Dramatiska studier." The author, who had traveled extensively in Europe and met most of the famous literary men of the day, dedicates his "Studies"—and this is significant—to the "master" Ludwig Tieck to recall "dear memories" of Dresden days. Beskow was susceptible to all literary impulses and influences of great men, whether of this or that school, was a mediator between the Old School and the New in Sweden, and later in life was virtually, as secretary, the Swedish Academy personified. And so, the appearance of "Hildegard," with the accompanying dedication, seventeen years after he had met Tieck, must be interpreted as an unusual tribute to a Romantic "master."

The direct impulse for his drama, however, according to the author,<sup>1</sup> was not Tieck but the consecration of a nun in Rome in 1820, at which Beskow was present. If we add to this incident Beskow's youthful enthusiasm for saga literature, we can easily imagine the setting in "Hildegard." And that there was an enthusiasm for the saga and Swedish history is morally certain, according to Beskow's own testimony. In his "Reminiscences" (*Lefnadsminnen*)<sup>2</sup> we have the following conclu-

But the continued popularity of "The Runesword," it must be remarked, can scarcely be questioned. It was translated into French by Léuozon-Leduc, Paris, 1846, and into Finnish, 1855. Nicander's poems have gone through several editions in Sweden and many have been translated into foreign tongues. See Wirsén's biography of Nicander. It was due largely to the friendship of Nicander and Longfellow, contracted in Rome, 1827, that the latter's interest in Scandinavian literature was intensified.

<sup>1</sup> See "Dramatiska studier," första delen, p. 72. In the same place Beskow acknowledges his indebtedness for a few opening stanzas to a legend by Schack Staffeldt.

<sup>2</sup> Completed 1857. Printed in Stockholm, 1870. See p. 49.

sive autobiographical reference to studies at Uppsala in 1811:

"Strangely enough I had then (in 1811)<sup>1</sup> only two favorite subjects which interested me: mythology and Swedish history. Stridberg's mythology I had read through a countless number of times, so that I knew it by heart. Dalin's, Lagerbring's, and any other history I could get hold of, I devoured with insatiable hunger. Also Björner's "Tales of Combat" (*Kämpadater*), the *Wilkina Saga*, and any other sagas that were on hand. These I borrowed from the gardener's library and often read them at night; for sagas were held in but little esteem in any environment at the time and were considered suitable only for women."

The Goths, in the meantime, had been attracted by Beskow's "Gothic" qualities and he was elected to membership in the Society at the same time as Nicander, April 30, 1822.

"Hildegard" is much in the same style as "The Runesword" and must have been influenced by it. The Norse element is imbedded in a rigid Catholicism, the time is the sunset of Norse paganism, and the plan of the tragedy gives, to a certain extent, a contrast and conflict between Christianity and Scandinavian heathenism. The main theme—which does not concern us as much as that of "The Runesword"—is similar to the theme in "Atala" by Chateaubriand: the daughter Hildegard is the victim of a vow made by her Catholic parents to atone for a previous crime, and discovers too late that she is released from the stipulations of the vow. The motivation, as in Nicander's tragedy, is often inadequate. The sympathy for the viking religion is that of Nicander, Oehlenschläger, and Fouqué: it is tolerated side by side with Christianity. "Hildegard" has never been played, to my knowledge, but the tragedy furnishes good, dramatic reading, with beautiful poetic passages. Though more simple and concentrated, the drama, as a whole, does not come up to the high standard set by "The Runesword." Since the unities are observed, there is less variety and action than in "The Runesword."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Beskow, speaking later in the same paragraph about his religious emotions at the time, says: "This may seem somewhat unusual for a youth of fifteen." Now, Beskow was born in 1796, which would put the date of this interest in 1811.

<sup>2</sup> Beskow was much more of a dramatist than Nicander but, somehow,



The nature of the saga element in "Hildegard" is somewhat the same as in "The Runesword" but it has a stronger semblance of local color. This is due, first, to more explicit references to and descriptions of, viking characteristics and customs; secondly, to numerous references to specific characters and incidents in the sagas and early Scandinavian history; thirdly, to a comprehensive use of terms from Norse mythology. For instance, to illustrate these in order, in Act II, sc. 2, we find it was the custom in the race of Starkad and Storkirk to take a bride by force or robbery, and to fight a subsequent duel with her father if necessary. A forcible allusion to the viking ability as helmsmen is made in II, 4. With exemplary beauty, Björn describes, in a monolog in III, 2, the barbarian custom of women entering the funeral-mounds of their husbands and being burned with them. In I, 5, the author makes Hildegard a descendant of Ulf Jarl, an historical character who, according to Sturleson, (Olof Haraldson Saga, Chap. 158), protected Denmark while Knut was in England in 1026. Hakon Jarl, the well-known saga hero and pagan champion, is mentioned by way of comparison in IV, 1, and the historical Sven (Blotsven, i. e. Sacrifice-Sven), who burned the Uppsala temple, in II, 1. A specific part of the poetic Edda, Havamál, comes in for a share of the glory in III, 1. As an illustration of the use of Norse mythology, the following words of Björn in II, 4, will serve (he is speaking of the reported death of his friend Ragnar): "He has gone to his fathers! He has already pressed their hands in greeting and emptied the drinking-vessel with them, heard the harp of Brage, interpreted the riddle of life with Mimer, and seen his life reflected in Urda's wave."

"Hildegard" discloses a wide reading of saga material but there is no allegiance to any one particular tradition. The Norse element is concentrated in a subordinated character, Björn, who corresponds to Oldur, Palnatoke, and Hakon Jarl. Just as "Hildegard" did not attain the popularity of some of his other dramas, even if there were some notable contemporary exceptions to this rule. Better known dramas are: "Erik XIV," "Birger och hans ätt," "Gustaf Adolf i Tyskland," and "Torkel Knutsson."

Nicander's Oldur, Beskow's best portrayed character is the old viking representative Björn. Nicander had other heathens appear also, such as peasants, fighters, a viking lawgiver, and the hero Alrik himself. In "Hildegard," also, there is considerable of the viking left in the converted Ragnar, the father of the heroine. In fact, we have more definite information about his viking escapades than about any of those in "The Runesword." Between Ragnar's family and his father-in-law's there had existed of yore a bitter race hatred. Ragnar had captured his wife with the sword and slain her father in the single combat that followed.<sup>1</sup> He seems to forget that he is a Christian in the last scene, obtains his sword from Björn, and dies on it with these words:

Som viking jag begynt, som viking slutar  
jag livfets kamp.<sup>2</sup>

Now to come back to Björn. He was once besprinkled with water and is a nominal Christian (Act I, sc. 2), but in reality is a hardened, unbending viking with everything that name implies. He can look back upon a career full of wild adventure—which might be true of a viking like Oldur—but he is more frank and explicit about his former combats, and is therefore, a more sharply drawn type than Oldur. He has more individual traits. He is more of the real primitive Norseman. Deeds, bravery, and character mean more to him than titles or noble lineage. To him the farmer's son is on a par with the prince (cf. I, 5). There is no haze whatever to obscure the confessions of this epic-dramatic character. He speaks with apparent pride of earlier misdeeds—which to him are, naturally, deeds of valor—and his barbarism is a part of his moral conviction. He is sincere and firm; he speaks once only and then, if necessary, affirms with the sword. Then, when we learn in the fourth act (sc. 1) that he has burned Christian

<sup>1</sup> This constitutes his "crime" which he must atone for, as a Christian.

<sup>2</sup> "I have commenced and end the strife of life as a viking."

<sup>3</sup> Tegnér, who believed "Hildegard" to be a "very excellent production," preferred Björn to all the other characters. The scene where Ragnar dies in his armor receives special mention, also, as an effective scene. See letter to Beskow of October 13, 1836. *Jubelfestupplaga*, VI, pp. 293-94.

temples and slaughtered women and children, we know that he has been a viking of the most dreaded type.

Björn—whose very name “bear” is significant and typical—is a sturdy champion of the old gods and a pronounced skeptic as to the new religion. On an auspicious occasion he is willing to sacrifice his dearest possession, his battle-horse, to Thor and Odin, whom he believes propitious to “an old viking” (I, 2). The religion of his ancestors represents strength, whereas the new teachings have weakened men. The doctrines of love and peace, to Björn, represent a “life of milk and water” (I, 3). The custom of fasting “puts no marrow into the bones” (II, 2). The Catholics are ridiculed for “singing the soul to rest for pay.” Let the mortal die by the sword and he will rest in peace like his forefathers without any singing—is the idea in Act II, 1. He speaks slightly (II, 2) of a heathen who has been carried away by a “man with goat-legs and long horns,” because he would not become a Christian. Björn knows only fearlessness and fight; sword and victory are his only joy. He prefers to polish weapons—it will be remembered that Oldur is grinding his sword at the beginning of “The Runesword”—and to possess the “hammer-emblem” instead of the cross. For a time, much as in “The Runesword” and in “Hakon Jarl,” Björn sees that his faith is symbolic and not so different from Christianity, except in application; but, on the other hand, “women’s tears, lamentations, heart-pains, and natural deaths,” have no place in Björn’s system of life (III, 2).

The traditional disdain among the pagan Norsemen for a natural death was rooted, as is well known, in the fundamental principles of their religion: the blessedness of the fallen heroes in Valhalla. In this particular, Björn is a type. In Act II, sc. 4, he makes his confession:

—“den tro jag lärt af mina fäder  
gör lifvet ljust och friskt, och döden herrlig.”<sup>1</sup>

This death may be self-inflicted, especially when it is in the

<sup>1</sup> “The faith which I have learned from my forefathers makes life bright and fresh, and death glorious.”

nature of a sacrifice. Björn rejoices at what later proves to be a premature report of Ragnar's death. Ragnar, upon crossing the Baltic on his return from Jerusalem, had courageously appeased the anger of the gods by jumping into the sea. To Björn this was an ideal death for a viking, who needed no other sepulchral vault than the blue sky and the stars; no other funeral dirge than the harp of the water-sprite (II. 4). In Act III, sc. 1, Björn expresses his readiness to follow Ragnar and die himself before sunset. He asks Thiodulf, Hildegard's lover, to give him a "filled horn" when he is ready to fly to Odin, in order to empty it to the "memory of Ragnar, to the glory of the North, and for the gods of Valhalla." The following is typical for our viking; it is Björn's advice to Thiodulf (IV, 3):

"Tro icke qvinnan, yngling. Icke ens  
om hennes namn är Hildegard. Hon liknar  
den vackra blomman, hvilkens doft ger döden.  
· · · · ·  
Vig dig, som jag, vid svärdet. Om det brister,  
så dör du samma stund och ej vanärad."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Put no faith in woman, youth. Not even if her name is Hildegard. She resembles the beautiful flower whose fragrance yields death. Marry the sword like myself. If that breaks you will die the same moment and not dishonored."

## CONCLUSION

There were all degrees and varieties of interest in the Old Norse element during the Swedish Romantic period. It reached its boiling-point finally among the extreme militant Goths, for these were saga enthusiasts by confession and profession, and the best example of this type is Ling. But a spasmodic and often enthusiastic interest had existed long before the Goths appeared, and more particularly among the members of that literary coterie known later as the Fosforists. Whatever the contemporary effect was, the fact remains, also, that Atterbom's "Skaldarmal" appeared before the Gothic organ *Iduna*. Then there were some minor adherents of the Old School, who were undoubtedly influenced to a certain extent by the new tendencies, and who treated saga themes in the old style. These conservatives were not especially enthusiastic about the inner content of the sagas; they cared little for the genuine spirit and philosophy and of the new mythology, but wrote creditable poetry with sagas as a basis. Among these were Adolf Granberg and Charlotta d'Albedyll. A full-fledged and independent Romanticist, who sought to penetrate the very depths of vikingism and to reconcile it with Christianity, with personal experiences, and modern Romantic ideals, was Stagnelius. He knew Norse mythology as well as any Goth, probably, and certainly better than most of them. Lastly, we have two important dramatic productions where the interest in the saga age is epic and general: "The Runesword" and "Hildegard." These were both conceived during the Romantic period (and the first one completed) by the independent authors who were not elected to membership in the Gothic Society until some years later. In both of these dramas there is an effort to reconcile Norse paganism with Catholicism, i. e., Christianity, and in both of them the portrayal of the pagan element is the most successful.

Of no little importance was the negative interest in Old

Norse material during the second decade of the nineteenth century. Nothing that the Fosforists did along Gothic lines gave any cause for alarm. But the somewhat tactless methods adopted at first by some Goths did give rise to a certain apprehension in conservative circles. The result was a crusade against "Gotho-mania" by those who feared neglect or expulsion of the old classical mythologies. This crusade was not conducted along strict party lines. The Gothic house was divided against itself, and unnecessarily so, for the differences of conception among its members were not as great as supposed and were often based on misunderstanding. Time proved that there had been little cause for solicitude in the first place. Those who did not take part in direct polemics resorted to ridicule. The Academician Stjernstolpe, for instance, attacked all Gothism, and the Romantic humorists Vitalis and Dahlgren poured light ridicule over exaggerations of it. But the whole affair did have a healthy influence; it stirred things up. Everybody was forced to recognize at least the existence of an indigenous material, which might be used as a basis for a national art and poetry. Then also, anybody who took a part in the controversy at all, whether for or against, was compelled to read the Old Norse literature to some extent; it took considerable knowledge of Scandinavian mythology to ridicule it intelligently.

All of the important Fosforists studied the Scandinavian myths, but no Gothic masterpiece came from their hands. Hammarskjöld was interested in the sagas but preferred to leave them as such, without introducing them into Swedish art or poetry. Livijn was very enthusiastic about them, especially during the first decade of the century, and formulated a multitude of literary plans with Gothic themes, but he became otherwise employed and plans came to naught. What little he did was fragmentary. Atterbom's work in this line during the strictly Romantic period, save "Skaldarmal," was limited to reviews and active encouragements, but he showed a genuine enthusiasm and was a scholar and philosopher in the interpretation of Norse myths. That Atterbom exerted some influence in this field is tolerably certain.

The old Norse sources employed by the Swedish writers of the Romantic period were not very extensive. In many cases the poetic products reveal only a general knowledge of olden times, beliefs, and literary monuments. In the case of Atterbom, Stagnelius, and Nicander (in the "Runes"), however, we have undeniable evidence of a more detailed acquaintance with specific sagas. The Eddas are naturally of the greatest importance for a thinker like Atterbom; Sturleson's *Heimskringla* seems to be well known and very popular, both in Academician circles and with Stagnelius; and Nicander borrows themes from the famous cycle of *Fornaldar Sögur*. Some more modern histories of Scandinavia are used and Livijn, for instance, knows Saxo Grammaticus.

It is certain that the Goths were responsible for only a part of the so-called Gothic revival in Sweden. The honor and responsibility for the inauguration and permanent establishment of this commendable movement in Swedish literature must be shared with their Romantic brothers the Fosforists, and to a greater extent than at first supposed. It must be shared to a less degree with neutrals and some Academicians, and with such individuals as Stagnelius, who was a member of no society, but represented the deepest of all Romantic and Gothic ideals. In no case was there such a general ignorance of Norse mythology among the Tieck-Novalis-Schelling group of Swedish Romanticists as among the Goths themselves. Atterbom, Livijn, Stagnelius, and Nicander, all knew a number of sagas and myths thoroughly; whereas among the Goths, any valuable knowledge of Old Norse subjects was concentrated in the minds of only two or three men, an extremely small number in proportion to the total number of members. Both in aspiration, encouragement, and actual creation the non-Goths did a noble work along national lines, and did much to prepare the field for the reception of that Gothic masterpiece, which came as the culmination of the Gothic revival: Tegnér's "Frithiofs Saga."

## APPENDIX

### SUPPLEMENTARY BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL NOTES

(Arranged alphabetically)

#### *Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom (1790-1855)*

The greatest of the Fosforists was born in Östergötland, Jan. 19, 1790. His childhood was very peaceful and idyllic and later furnished inspiration for many of his beautiful lyrics. Atterbom attended school and the gymnasium in Linköping, at sixteen he became a student at Uppsala, and studied the German philosophers and Romanticists. His part in founding the Aurora Union has been mentioned. He was the foremost contributor to *Fosforos* and edited *Poetisk Kalender* from 1812 to 1822. From 1817 to 1819 he lived abroad, and on his return became prince Oscar's tutor in German. For a time he was professor of philosophy in Uppsala, but later exchanged this position for the chair of esthetics. In later life he became reconciled to his former literary adversaries and was admitted to the Swedish Academy in 1839. In his momentous but unfinished work "Swedish Seers and Skalds" (*Svenska siare och skaldar*), which deals with philosophers and poets before and through the reign of Gustavus III, Atterbom is less harsh in his estimate of the Gustavian writers. Atterbom's domestic life was remarkably happy and a late edition of "The Isle of Bliss" is dedicated to the memory of his departed wife. He outlived most of his friends and died July 21, 1855, in Stockholm.

As a poet, esthetician, critic, and historian of literature, Atterbom exercised a vast influence on Swedish letters and culture. "The Isle of Bliss" and the fragmentary "Blue-Bird" (*Fogel blå*) are both fairy-tales in dramatized form. But Atterbom was no dramatist; he was a lyric poet, and as such he ranks unquestionably as one of the greatest in Sweden,



notwithstanding symbolism, obscurantism, and strange cosmic conceptions which permeate portions of his lyrics. Atterbom represents the culmination, the *tout ensemble* of the "oändlighetspoesi" in Swedish Romanticism. Among his most famous poems is the collection called "The Flowers" (Blommorna), a lyrical vegetation marked by beauty and originality but highly figurative and obscure. (Cf. Thomander: *Inträdestal öfver Atterbom. Svenska Akademiens handlingar ifrån 1796, Del 29.*)

*Bernhard von Beskow (1796-1868)*

Beskow was born in 1796 and at an early date began to study music and painting. In 1819-1821 he traveled in Europe and met Goethe, Tieck, F. Schlegel, and Oehlenschläger. In 1827-1828, the time of the struggle between the French classicists and Romanticists, we find Beskow in France. There he learned to know Hugo and took the opportunity to correct some erroneous statements about Swedish literature in *Le Globe*. Beskow was both a fascinating dramatist and an able composer of operas. He was a member, secretary, and prize-taker of the Swedish Academy, a member of the Swedish Academy of Music, and of a number of French and Danish societies. From a copyist in the department of finance of the king's chancery he worked his way up to chamberlain at the court. His drama "Erik XIV" was particularly well received; it was translated into German, and parts of it into English and Danish. Beskow died in 1868. (Cf. Palmblad: article on Beskow in *Biografiskt Lexikon*, Vol. 2, 1836.)

*Carl Fredrik Dahlgren (1791-1844)*

Dahlgren was a gifted poet, noted for his sane and realistic descriptions of nature and for his delightful humor. In his famous "Epistles of Mollberg" (Mollbergs epistlar) he took Bellman for his model and wrote in a light and original vein. Dahlgren, who was a clergyman, is said to have been a good preacher and pastor, and a very popular man in society. His pleasant shafts of humor were directed at everybody and not even the Fosforists (to whom Dahlgren once belonged) escaped.

There was no great depth in his poetry, but neither was there any unfathomable metaphysics, and so he was best in his clear, simple, and "sunny spring-dithyrambs." Dahlgren also composed popular ditties and kept a salon in the thirties for Young Sweden. Later he became a politician and member of the Riksdag. (Cf. Vetterlund: Notes on Dahlgren in introduction to "Svensk romantik," II, of Svensk national-litteratur.)

*Per Elgström (1781-1810)*

Per Elgström, an important member of Aurora, was born on Christmas Eve 1781, in the province of Småland, and his mother was a poor peasant's daughter. He studied German philosophy and poetry at Uppsala and took his master's degree in 1809. For a time he was tutor in the house of a nobleman and clerk in the ecclesiastical department in Stockholm. He contributed to *Polyfem* and to the first numbers of *Fosforos*. His untimely death of consumption October 28, 1810, was the cause for deep mourning in Fosforistic circles.

*Erik Gustaf Geijer (1783-1847)*

The literary standard-bearer of the Gothic union during its first, hurricane-period was born in Värmland, January 12, 1783, and descended from an old family which had emigrated to Sweden from Germany in the early part of the seventeenth century. At twelve Geijer entered Karlstad gymnasium and only four years later matriculated at Uppsala. He had no definite profession in mind but studied the classics, history, and, at spare moments, music. He was a student of only moderate means and supported himself by tutoring. In 1803 he captured the prize offered by the Swedish Academy for the best work on the memory of Sten Sture, three years later he was made master of arts, and in 1808 received a welcome stipend. In 1809 he went to England and upon his return the year after, he was appointed docent in history at his Alma Mater. He was promoted to "adjunct" with right to lecture in 1815, and was made full professor after two years. Lydia Wahlström (Erik Gustaf Geijer, p. 226,) divides Geijer's

mature activity into the following periods: from 1810 to 1820, the "special philosophical"; from 1820 to 1838, a term of activity in history and in conservative, practical politics; and, finally, from 1838 to his death in 1847, the liberal philosophical period. Geijer is to be remembered as a popular teacher, a music enthusiast and composer, a conscientious, scientific historian, an essayist, a philosopher, and member of the Riksdag. He was an intimate friend of Atterbom and of the world-renowned singer Jenny Lind. The significant influence of Hans Järta's friendship for Geijer's development is historical. Of Geijer's more pretentious works the following two deserve special mention: "The Annals of Sweden" (*Svea rikets häfder*) and "The History of the Swedish People" (*Svenska folkets historia*). (For an account of Geijer's life and works, with analyses of important publications, consult Lydia Wahlström: Erik Gustaf Geijer, Stockholm, 1907.)

*Lorenzo (Lars) Hammar skjöld (1785-1827)*

Hammar skjöld, the foremost pioneer to proclaim the new ideas from Germany, was born April 7, 1785. He first received instruction at home and, after the loss of his father at the age of fourteen, his older brother Åke helped him to continue his studies elsewhere. He matriculated at Uppsala in 1801 and studied in almost every humanistic field. He was not a good student, however, never became much of a philologist, and was not "promoted" in 1816, though he took his master's degree six years later. His youth was not free from Weltschmerz or eccentric plans of life; he read "La nouvelle Héloïse" and "Werther," wished to be a soldier or a bandit, and had an unhappy love-affair; for his sweetheart, Eleanora Rääf, married his brother. But early troubles had no unwholesome effect upon Hammar skjöld, and in 1806 he was appointed assistant (*amanuens*) in the Royal Library in Stockholm. His most influential work, as we have noted, was as a program-maker, as critic of esthetics, and as an historian of literature and art. His large correspondence at the Royal Library is the best first-hand source for the study of the development of the

New Movement, and a great many of his letters have been published. Hammarskjöld died in 1827. (Cf. letters; *Biografiskt Lexikon*, article on Hammarskjöld, and *Svenska vitterhetens historia*, III, 579ff.)

*Samuel Johan Hedborn (1783-1849)*

Hedborn was born October 14, 1783, in a poor soldier's home in Östergötland. Personal impressions of childhood became of paramount importance in his later development. He attended school and gymnasium in Linköping, was a member of the *Aurorabund*, and a contributor to the publications of the *Fosforists*. In 1809 he was ordained to the ministry, in 1820 he became pastor in an isolated place in Småland and thereafter lived a secluded life, though he never ceased to write entirely nor to keep in touch with his friend Atterbom. Hedborn possessed the gift of pure lyric, a fresh naiveté, and Atterbom characterized him as the poet of nature, childhood, and religious devotion. He wrote some splendid hymns and was probably the greatest of the minor *Fosforists*. He died December 26, 1849. (Cf. Biographical note on Hedborn in *Vetterlund's* introduction to "*Svensk romantik*" in *Svensk national-litteratur*, Vol. IX.)

*Johan Henrik Kellgren (1751-1795)*

Kellgren was a leading representative of the Old School and famous as a critic and esthetician. At first he strenuously defended the French system of esthetic principles, but later he anticipated the new literary movement by deviating somewhat from its stern rigidity and then wrote poems with deep feeling and in a sublime style. *Baggesen* and *Klopstock* were among his later favorites. Hammarskjöld calls Kellgren's "*The New Creation, or the World of Imagination*" (*Nya skapelsen eller inbildningens värld*) "the most excellent lyrical production in our (i. e., Swedish) language before 1810." Cf. Hammarskjöld: *Svenska vitterheten*, 2d edition, pp. 334-335.)

*Karl Gustaf af Leopold (1756-1829)*

Leopold must be mentioned here again as being the sworn enemy and the target, par excellence, of the New School.

After the death of Kellgren in 1795, Leopold became the leading veteran of the Gustavian party. He wrote didactic poems, odes, poetic epistles, satires, and tragedies in the French style. He possessed a broad culture, a sparkling wit, a vast knowledge, and a complete mastery of form. But he clung tenaciously to the *sense commun* method of reasoning and had no deep feeling or brilliant talent to offset his blemishes. (Cf. Horn: *Scandinavian Literature*, pp. 357-358.) Hammerskjöld declares rather pointedly that Leopold's aim in life was to become "a Voltaire in Swedish translation." (*Svenska vitterheten*, 2d edition, p. 466.)

*Per Henrik Ling (1776-1839)*

The "founder of scientific gymnastics," Per Henrik Ling, was born in the province of Småland, November 15, 1776. His father, a priest in Ljunga, died when Per was only four years old and his mother married the successor to the Ljunga pastorate. At nine Per was sent off to school in Växjö and his mother died a few years later, so that Ling only barely remembered even his mother. In 1790 we find Ling attending the gymnasium, but he made little progress, and after being instrumental in smashing the windows of the rector's house he left suddenly one night, and was then officially separated from the gymnasium. He matriculated at the University of Lund in the spring of 1793 but was soon obliged to leave for lack of funds. Where he spent the next two or three years remains a puzzle, but he seems to have been in Stockholm part of the time, earning his livelihood by tutoring and translating. In 1797 he took an unimportant examination in theology at Uppsala, and in 1799 came the turning-point in his career when he left for the Danish capital to continue his studies. In Copenhagen he taught modern languages, made the acquaintance of Oehlenschläger and Steffens, commenced the study of Norse mythology, and took up gymnastics for his health. Ling moved back to Lund in 1804 and became teacher of fencing at the University the year after. He combined the study of anatomy and physiology with the writing of poetry and worked out plans

for historical tragedies. The development of both body and soul, combined with the training of the imagination, was to be the guiding motto in Ling's life. Tegnér, on whom Ling exerted such an epoch-making influence, helped his friend to obtain, in 1813, the position as instructor in gymnastics at the Karlberg military school in Stockholm. While in the capital Ling became acquainted with a large number of artists and men of letters, but would have nothing to do with the Fosforists. He joined the Goths, however, soon after his arrival. In 1815 the Swedish Academy awarded him the Lundblad prize for "Gylfe," and this official recognition of his poetic ability no doubt did much to encourage subsequent and more titanic efforts. Ling's life was not free from material solicitude, but with an iron will the poet-gymnast overcame all obstacles. In 1817 he lost his first wife, leaving a young daughter. Two years later he married Charlotta Katarina Nettelbladt by whom he had seven children. With the title of professor, Ling left Karlberg in 1825 and afterwards devoted most of his time to The Central Institute (Centralinstitutet) in Stockholm, a school established in 1814 for the scientific training of gymnasts. Ling died May 3, 1839. (Cf. Lydia Wahlström: *Den svenska odlingens stormän*, Vol. V.)

*Clas Livijn (1781-1844)*

Clas Livijn was born on November 1, 1781, and died as a prominent lawyer October 12, 1844. His father, a clergyman, died in 1802, and this caused an unpleasantness in the family which seriously affected the son. For a time he had difficulty in choosing a profession. He had matriculated at Lund in October 1800, but in the autumn of 1802 he entered Uppsala, where he took his examination in law in 1805. His life, and more particularly his youth, was a constant see-saw of happiness and despair; he hovered between absolute indifference and boundless ambition, and this together with his ironical, skeptical mind is said to have been provoked thoughts of suicide. He was a typical *Stürmer und Dränger*, sensitive, witty and interesting. As a young poet Livijn failed to obtain recog-

nition by the Swedish Academy and so afterwards ridiculed it. He was an ardent friend and admirer of Hammarskjöld, with whom he kept up a lively correspondence, and the latter reciprocated the admiration by dubbing Livijn "the coming Swedish Goethe." (See Svenska vitterhetens historia, III, p. 591.) Livijn's early inclination for English literature, his sympathy for German classics, and his spasmodic interest in Old Norse make him a most important forerunner of Swedish Romanticism. Livijn made translations from Tieck, considerably later his own "Queen of Spades" (Spader dame), 1823, was in turn translated by Fouqué, and Livijn's opera "The Mermaid" (Hafsfrun) "was probably the first Romantic drama written in Sweden." (Cf. Biografiskt Lexikon, Vol. 8: article on Livijn.) Livijn was also actively connected with *Polyfem*, and the precise amount of his contribution has in recent years been pretty well established. That he was not the famous writer who signed himself "Nils Nyberg" seems certain; this honor is now bestowed upon Hammarskjöld. (Cf. Svenska vitterhetens historia, IV, p. 87 and note.)

*Carl August Nicander (1799-1839)*

Nicander was born in Strengnäs. During his boyhood he formed a warm friendship with Sjöberg-Vitalis, which became of the utmost importance for both, and which only terminated in Vitalis's death. While Vitalis was gloomy and bitter toward humanity, Nicander was mild, gentle and lovable. In his occasional weakness Nicander was often encouraged and strengthened by his friend who, undoubtedly, received some well-needed comfort in return. Nicander often suffered from want and misery, and never had any fixed position in the community. We find him in Uppsala in 1817. In 1827 he traveled south on a stipend and after his return we can detect a deep mourning for Italy in his poetry. Many of his best poems are written in Italian and German. Nicander also made translations from Schiller ("Die Räuber" and "Die Jungfrau v. Orleans") and Shakespeare ("Othello"), and wrote some of the best sonnets in the Swedish language. In 1830 he published "Reminiscences from the South" (Minnen från södern) and "Hesper-

rider," a collection of poems and tales. Other significant works, besides "The Runesword," are "Tasso's Death" and "King Enzo, the Last Hohenstaufen." His collected poems, in four parts, have gone through several editions. When Nicander died in 1839 it was found at the post-mortem examination that he had suffered and finally succumbed to the same disease as Stagnelius, enlargement of the heart, this organ having grown to twice its natural size. (Cf. Life of Nicander by Mellin in Vol. 4 of *Samlade dikter*, Stockholm, 1841.)

*Wilhelm Fredrik Palmblad (1788-1852)*

One of the founders of the Aurorabund was W. F. Palmblad who remained a zealous champion of the Fosforists. He wrote some insignificant poems and some mediocre novels, "The family Falkensvärd," (*Familien Falkensvärd*) and "Aurora Königsmark," but his chief celebrity was gained as controversialist, biographer, editor, and publisher. For twenty-five years, beginning 1810, Palmblad was manager of the academic printing establishment in Uppsala, which sent out *Fosforos*, *Poetisk Kalender*, and *Svensk Literatur-Tidning*. Palmblad was contributor to several literary periodicals and did work in Persian and Hindu antiquity. In 1835 he began to edit "Biografiskt Lexikon" and wrote many of the articles himself. He possessed a good sense of humor, was unusually witty, and entertained royally "under the low roof of his first printing-office," where the English and German authors were read and discussed. Atterbom characterizes Palmblad as "one of the most learned men who ever wrote novels," and declares that a Swedish publicist had never existed who could be compared to him in geographical, statistical, historical, and political knowledge. (Cf. Atterbom: *Minnesteckningar och tal*. Senare bandet. Örebro, 1869, p. 205.)

*Erik Johan Stagnelius (1793-1823)*

This dreamy and hypochondriacal but highly gifted poet was born on the Island of Öland in 1793. His father was a professor and minister who later became Bishop of Calmar. The



young Stagnelius speedily devoured everything in his father's library and when he left for the academy he was splendidly equipped in Norse mythology and the classics. He studied first at the University of Lund and then at Uppsala, where he took his examination for the chancery (Kansli-examen) in 1814. He lived a secluded life as a chancery-clerk in Stockholm and was little noticed while he was alive. He never took any part in the fashionable literary polemics of his age, but devoted his time to creative productions and to a strange, melancholy, mystic-pantheistic reflection. Stagnelius never married, but his poems have the tone of disappointed love, though his father denied the contention that his son had ever suffered from an unrequited affection. His poetic activity lasted only about eleven years, beginning 1812, but during that period he wrote enough idylls, elegies, sonnets, odes, romances, pure lyrics, epics and dramas to gain the deserved reputation of a great poet. His best known works, in addition to those with Norse motives, are: the epic "Vladimir the Great" (Wladimir den Store); "Bächanterna," a tragedy; the religious drama "The Martyrs" (Martyrerna); "The Knight's Tower" (Riddartornet), a Romantic drama; and that "half philosophical and half religious cycle of poems" "Lilies of Sharon" (Liljor i Saron). Stagnelius suffered from heart-failure, which gradually undermined his young life, and one morning in 1823 he was found dead in bed. The works of Stagnelius have been translated into German by K. F. L. Kannegiesser, Leipzig, 6 vols. 1851. I have not seen this translation. (Cf. Introduction by Hammarskjöld in part I of his edition of Stagnelius's *Samlade skrifter*; also, supplement at end of part 3.)

### *Esaias Tegnér (1782-1846)*

The author of "Frithiof's Saga," the greatest writer of the Swedish Romantic period and, undoubtedly, the best known Swedish poet of all times, needs but little consideration here. In connection with our specific topic, however, it becomes necessary to call attention to an apparently wrong impression about Tegnér's relation to the Romanticists, an impression which is

more especially entertained by foreign historians of Swedish literature. For instance, Bernardi in "La Littérature scandinave" (Paris, 1894, p. 64) calls Tegnér the head of the Gothic School, and either ignores the Romantic movement under German influence entirely, or knew nothing about it. To Bernardi, Bellman and Tegnér are the only names of the whole Romantic movement worthy of mention, and such an unconditional dismissal of the subject is not only misleading but morally unjust. Tegnér was not the militant head of any school but above all schools. He was elected a member of the Gothic group, to be sure, he eventually became its greatest literary exponent, he contributed to *Iduna*, and ultimately acquired his greatest claim to a cosmopolitan immortality by the treatment of a Norse theme in accordance with Gothic principles; but Tegnér was never guilty of the Gothic exaggerations and openly opposed the Fosforists. Tegnér was a leader in poetic art, pure and simple, and no slave who abided strictly by the formulated dogmas of any one literary faith.

Tegnér was born November 13, 1782, in Värmland. After the death of his father, a clergyman, young Tegnér found patrons who assumed care of his studies. At twenty years of age he became docent of esthetics at the University of Lund, in 1806 he married, in 1812 he was ordained to the ministry, and also became professor of Greek in Lund. A learned Hellenist and popular lecturer, he was dean of the faculty of philosophy from 1814 to 1823, and the following year he was appointed Bishop of Växjö. In 1833 he journeyed to Bohemia for his health and on the way met Schleiermacher, Steffens, and others. Liver trouble and a consequent recurring of melancholia affected his mind, so that in 1840 Tegnér was taken to an asylum in Schleswig for treatment. He recovered sufficiently to take up his work again, but he never regained his former vigor and died November 2, 1846. The following poems will give any reader an estimate of Tegnér's power: "War-song for the Militia of Scania" (Krigssång för skånska landtvärnet), 1808; the prize-poem "Svea," 1811; "Nore," 1814; "New-Years 1816" (Nyåret 1816); "The Children of the Lord's Supper"

(*Nattvardsbarnen*), 1820, translated by H. W. Longfellow; "*Axel*," a narrative poem, 1821; and "*Frithiof's Saga*," 1825. The latter has been translated into almost every European tongue. There are at least twenty-five different translations of it into German and twenty-two into English, the last one by Clement B. Shaw of Chicago. (Cf. Introduction to the *Nationalupplaga* of Tegnér's *Samlade skrifter*, by Böttiger; also Brandes: *Esaias Tegnér*.)

*Erik Julius Sjöberg-Vitalis (1794-1828)*

Vitalis was born in Södermanland in 1794. His father was a poor workman and his mother a minister's daughter. He exhibited in early youth a marked gift for study and poetry so that his friends helped him to obtain an education. He entered the gymnasium in 1809, but left suddenly in 1814 and went to Uppsala. Vitalis's whole life is a record of hardships; he was always poor but too sensitive to accept material aid without humiliation, he suffered immensely from an incurable physical malady, and contracted debts, but managed to support himself, after a fashion, by tutoring and translating. He received a stipend in 1822 and by a most extraordinary will-power succeeded in taking his doctorate of philosophy in 1824. Though a friend of Nicander, as we have seen, he attacked both the Fosforists and Goths, and in so doing displayed a decided talent for satire and humor. To better his chances Vitalis moved to Stockholm in 1827, but found only more trouble and, in the following year, death. (Cf. Carl L. Östergren: *Vitalis, hans lif och diktning*, Uppsala, 1869.)

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# THE SOLILOQUY IN GERMAN DRAMA

BY

ERWIN W. ROESSLER, PH.D.



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**TO**  
**MY PARENTS**  
**WHOSE SELF-DENIAL MADE POSSIBLE MY EDUCATION**



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## INTRODUCTION

In the family of dramatic conventions no member has played so important a role, and on the other hand none has had so ignominious an ending, after a most glorious career, as the soliloquy. In its present crushed and lowly estate, it forcibly reminds one of the last years of the great exile at St. Helena. After centuries of the greatest popularity with both playwright and audience, the soliloquy has at last met with the fate of most popular idols and been ruthlessly ousted from its comfortable throne.

This revulsion of feeling occurred in the final decades of the nineteenth century, when "the leading playwrights of every modern language began to display a distaste for the monolog, with Ibsen setting the example of renunciation."<sup>1</sup> There seems to be a consensus of opinion regarding Ibsen's stimulating influence on the technic of modern drama,<sup>2</sup> an influence which manifested itself particularly in the disappearance of the soliloquy from the drama. Mr. Hamilton says: "The present prevalence of objection to soliloquy and aside is due largely to the strong influence of Ibsen's rigid dramaturgic structure."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Henderson, commenting upon Ibsen's remark that his "League of Youth" is written "without a single monolog, in fact, without a single aside," declares: "In this respect, I believe Ibsen sounded the deathknell of the monolog, the soliloquy, the aside, and by his practice soon rendered ridiculous those dramatists who persisted in employing these devices."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A Study of the Drama, by Brander Matthews, New York, 1910, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> The Development of the Drama, by Brander Matthews, New York, 1906, pp. 37, 321, 326, 349. Der Monolog und Ibsen, by R. Franz, Marburg, 1907, p. 95. Die deutsche Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts, R. M. Meyer, Berlin, 1906, pp. 709, 787, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Theory of the Theatre, by Clayton Hamilton, New York, 1910, p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> The Evolution of Dramatic Technic, by Archibald Henderson, North American Review, March, 1909, p. 439. For this and a few other citations I am indebted to Mr. Arnold's monograph on The Soliloquies of Shakespeare. New York, 1911.

R. V. Gottschall repeatedly rails at Ibsen for having given the soliloquy its deathblow.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Brander Matthews admits that Ibsen "has been masterly in his adjustment of his methods to the conditions of the picture-frame stage,"<sup>2</sup> but shifts the real responsibility for the disappearance of the soliloquy a little further back upon Edison's shoulders, as the introduction of electric lighting together with the picture-frame stage created a setting so realistic that the stepping out of the picture to talk intimately with the audience was felt to be entirely out of place. The fact remains, however, that Ibsen was the first to realize this inappropriateness and, having realized it, to perfect a new technique that discarded soliloquies and asides. Accordingly he is entitled to the greatest credit.

Before discussing the various types of soliloquy and quoting the opinions held by critics and poets regarding the value and justification of the same, a definition of the soliloquy might not be amiss.

St. Augustine coined the Latin *soliloquium* from *solus* and *loqui*, a "talking alone," from which the English form is derived.<sup>3</sup> The Standard Dictionary defines soliloquy as a talking to one's self regardless of the presence or absence of others, a discourse uttered for one's own benefit. The French form *soliloque* is defined as the discourse of a person who talks to himself.<sup>4</sup> For some mysterious reason the German language has refused the rights of naturalization to the Latin applicant, and there seems to be but one instance<sup>5</sup> of its use and that in the Latin form. In the above definitions it is noteworthy that there is not the slightest suggestion of the stage or the drama.

Turning to the word *monolog*, from the Greek *μόνος* and *λόγος*, a "talking alone," what do we find? Oxford dictionary: "a scene in which a person of the drama speaks by himself; contrasted with chorus and dialogue." Standard: a dramatic solil-

<sup>1</sup> Zur Kritik des modernen Dramas, by R. v. Gottschall, Berlin, 1900, pp. 11, 119, 213.

<sup>2</sup> Matthews, A Study of the Drama, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Skeat, Etymological Dictionary.

<sup>4</sup> Nouveau Larousse, vol. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Bodmer in a letter to C. H. Miller, March 5, 1782.

oquy. Both add a modern use, viz., a dramatic composition for a single performer, a kind of dramatic entertainment performed throughout by one person, as, e. g., a monolog in vaudeville. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Meyer's and Brockhaus' *Konversations-Lexika* and *La grande Encyclopédie* all agree that a monolog is a passage in a dramatic piece in which a personage holds the scene to himself and speaks to himself. It would seem, then, that monolog and soliloquy, although etymologically equivalent, are not synonymous, inasmuch as the former refers to a portion of a drama, whereas the latter does not necessarily suggest the footlights. The difficulty can be peacefully settled, however, and both of the contestants put upon an equal footing by prefixing "dramatic" to soliloquy. Why English and American critics, with few exceptions,<sup>1</sup> have preferred the term soliloquy, in spite of the fact that all German<sup>2</sup> and French critics and dramatists have used *Monolog* and *monologue* respectively, is a question that I am unable to answer.

I should accordingly re-phrase Dr. Arnold's definition, "It is evident that all soliloquies are monologs, but that monologs are not necessarily soliloquies,"<sup>3</sup> as follows: Not all soliloquies are monologs, but monologs are necessarily dramatic soliloquies.

A dramatic soliloquy then is a passage in a drama in which a character is alone upon the stage and speaks to himself, believing himself to be alone. Even when the character is not alone on the stage his speech may be a soliloquy if it shows that the character is entirely oblivious to his surroundings.

How does the aside differ from the soliloquy? Mr. Paull,<sup>4</sup> Mr. Henderson<sup>5</sup> and Dr. Hennequin<sup>6</sup> maintain that it is nothing more than a short monolog. Inasmuch as the aside is a

<sup>1</sup> Dryden, *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*, 1668. Hédelin, *The Whole Art of the Stage Made English*, 1684. A. Hennequin, *The Art of Playwriting*, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> The word *Selbstgespräch* is occasionally used, but it may refer to a soliloquy off the stage as well as to a monolog.

<sup>3</sup> *The Soliloquies of Shakespeare*, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Dramatic Convention with Special Reference to the Soliloquy*, *Fortnightly Review*, May, 1899, p. 863 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *The Evolution of Dramatic Technic*, *North American Review*, March, 1909, p. 432 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *Art of Playwriting*, p. 152 ff.



remark uttered by an actor on the stage so as not to be heard by other characters on the stage, it violates two of the principles of the monolog. The speaker of the aside is not alone on the stage, nor does he believe himself alone; he is not speaking to himself, but nearly always to the audience. The distinctive characteristic of the aside is that it occurs in the midst of dialog, although it is also regularly used in connection with the overheard soliloquy.

The overheard soliloquy, frequently employed in Roman comedy, crops out in large numbers in Gryphius's comedies and continues to be in vogue till Lessing's time—a good example occurs in "Der junge Gelehrte." Kleist makes use of this device on one occasion, but as a rule it has been tabooed by serious drama. It is, indeed, an "arrant absurdity, a contradiction in terms."<sup>1</sup> Inasmuch as the convention of the dramatic soliloquy is that the audience is permitted to overhear the thoughts of a character when he is alone on the stage, that the thoughts are made audible only for the audience, the absurdity of one actor actually overhearing another's thoughts becomes evident.

The definition of monolog and soliloquy, the former referring to the stage, the latter to real life, naturally suggests the question: To what extent is it natural to soliloquize off the stage? "No person in the full possession of his senses will utter more than short exclamations when he is alone. He may cry, sing, whistle, even laugh, mumble a few words, but never express what he feels, least of all what he intends to do."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Arnold says that it is undeniable that people do talk to themselves, but that it is preposterous "that young, healthy persons audibly set forth their secret ideas at great length."<sup>3</sup> I hardly believe that only the aged and infirm indulge in this peculiarity. Say what one will, the fact remains that a person who soliloquizes is considered peculiar, if not slightly demented. As Jean Paul puts it: "A person who in his waking moments talks to himself fills us with a shudder; and if I hear myself talking

<sup>1</sup> Brander Matthews, Putnam's Monthly, Nov., 1906, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> R. Franz, Der Monolog und Ibsen, Marburg, 1907, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> The Soliloquies of Shakespeare, p. 20.

when alone I have the same feeling."<sup>1</sup> Gottfried Keller in his autobiographical novel confesses: "I felt ashamed of myself; I could not hear myself talk alone and I was no longer able to pray aloud even in the deepest solitude and secrecy."<sup>2</sup> Heyse<sup>3</sup> refers to soliloquizing as a weakness; Dostojewsky<sup>4</sup> refers to a soliloquizer as a hypochondriac. Paull tersely says: "A man does not speak to himself, unless indeed he is beside himself."<sup>5</sup>

But—*altera pars audiatur!* For the soliloquy has champions as well as sarcastic defamers. Diderot, in his essay on dramatic poetry, writes: "You know that I have long been in the habit of soliloquizing. When I return home sad and chagrined I retire to my study and there I question myself and ask: what ails you?"<sup>6</sup> Marmontel in his "Poétique" defends the soliloquy in ardent fashion: "It is entirely natural to speak to one's self. There is not a person who does not find himself talking to himself at times about matters that affect or seriously interest him."<sup>7</sup> Nicolai maintains that it is not contrary to nature for a person who is aroused or excited to talk to himself.<sup>8</sup> Henderson grants that "people sometimes—and not infrequently—do give audible expression to their thoughts and feelings."<sup>9</sup> According to H. Gartelmann it is "a well known phenomenon that people not infrequently begin to think aloud, to soliloquize, when greatly moved."<sup>10</sup> The almost proverbial dictum, "There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous," is said to be a part of a soliloquy delivered by Napoleon on his return from Russia. Dr. H. Schlag denies that soliloquies are unnatural and insists that many persons when alone allow their thoughts to become audible.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Titan, 94. *Zykel*, Hempel's ed., Vol. 15-18, p. 434. For this and a few other quotations I am indebted to R. Franz, *ut supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Der grüne Heinrich, I, 44, ed. 1904.

<sup>3</sup> Merlin, I, 59, ed. 1892.

<sup>4</sup> Ein sanftes Weib, *Magazin für Litteratur*, 1897, p. 1506.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 868.

<sup>6</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. by Assezat, Paris, 1895. Belles Lettres IV, Chap. XVII.

<sup>7</sup> *Oeuvres*, second ed., Paris, 1767, Vol. I, p. 359 ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Abhandlung vom Trauerspiele*, in *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften*, etc., 1757, I, p. 48 ff.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 433.

<sup>10</sup> *Dramatik*, Berlin, 1892, p. 169.

<sup>11</sup> *Das Drama*, Essen, 1909, p. 306 ff.

So much for the views, favorable and otherwise, on the soliloquy off the stage. What, on the other hand, are the views of the critics with regard to the dramatic soliloquy, the monolog? Long soliloquies have been the subject of attacks for several centuries and in many climes. About the middle of the 16th century an Italian critic, dramatist and impresario, De Sommi of Mantua, objects to monologs, basing his objection on the fact that long soliloquies on the street are entirely unnatural.<sup>1</sup> A reporter in Pesaro in 1574 bewails his sad lot, as the monotony of the soliloquies in a comedy he had to criticize proved almost unendurable.<sup>2</sup> Hédelin, Abbé d'Aubignac, (1657) objects strenuously to expository soliloquies, *ce mauvais artifice, ce secours étranger*, and also to emotional soliloquies whose position in the drama makes them absurd: as, e. g., when a lover, hearing of a danger that threatens his mistress, soliloquizes at great length instead of hurrying to her aid.<sup>3</sup> The Earl of Mulgrave in his "Essay on Poetry" (1717) believed that:

"First then, Soliloquies had need be few,  
Extremely short, and spoke in passion too."<sup>4</sup>

Gottsched, a few years later (1730), after condemning all soliloquies on the ground that "kluge Leute pflegen nicht laut zu reden, wenn sie allein sind," relents and adds: "es wäre denn in besonderen Affekten, und das zwar mit wenig Worten."<sup>5</sup> Ramler, who is little more than the editor and translator of Batteux, insists that "every soliloquy must be short, because it is almost unnatural. If it is long, the person must be violently agitated."<sup>6</sup>

J. von Sonnenfels, theatrical censor at Vienna and author of "Briefe über die Wienerische Schaubühne," objects to all monologs on the ground of their improbability, especially to

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte des neueren Dramas, W. Creizenach, Vol. II, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, note 2, p. 287.

<sup>3</sup> Pratique du Théâtre, Paris, 1657. Englished in 1684: The Whole Art of the Stage.

<sup>4</sup> An Essay on Poetry, London, 1717, p. 308.

<sup>5</sup> Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst, p. 598.

<sup>6</sup> Einleitung in die schönen Wissenschaften, S. K. W. Ramler, Vol. II, p. 246 ff.

the purely expositional type. He finds them permissible only when passion is at its height, and the heart too small to contain the inner struggle. But even then long, logically arranged speeches are out of place. "In such moments the restless character utters disjointed, disconnected speeches, he articulates *gebrochene Töne*, he is restless, sits, stands, runs back and forth, acts strangely."<sup>1</sup> G. Freytag practically condemns dramatic soliloquies, saying that the isolation of a character on the stage always requires an apology, and that monologs are not a necessary adjunct of modern dramas because of the numerous opportunities of disclosing thoughts and feelings which the modern stage gives to the characters. He also claims that the art of acting has brought about a changed conception of dramatic effects.<sup>2</sup> Edgar Allan Poe finds both asides and soliloquies preposterous and not as respectable as the shifts employed by Chinese playwrights.<sup>3</sup> Henderson does not go quite so far as Freytag when he says: "Dramatic craftsmanship has to-day reached a point of such complex excellence that the best dramatists refuse to employ so unworthy a device as the lengthy soliloquy."<sup>4</sup> Brevity is also insisted upon by Mr. Archer: "A few broken exclamations under high emotion is all the soliloquy that strict art should permit, for high emotion does in many cases manifest itself in speech."<sup>5</sup> It is noteworthy that critics have been unanimous in condemning the expositional soliloquy.

Not all critics, however, have objected to the long dramatic soliloquy which lays bare the soul. Hédelin approved of it, though with misgivings, when he said: "I confess that it is sometimes very pleasant to see a man upon the stage lay open his heart, and speak boldly of his most secret thoughts, explain his designs, and give vent to all that his passion suggests; but without doubt it is very hard to make an actor do it

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Düssel, *Der dramatische Monolog in der Poetik des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts und in den Dramen Lessings*, p. 15, Hamburg, 1897.

<sup>2</sup> *Technik des Dramas*, 10th ed., 1905, p. 192 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Woodberry ed., Vol. 7, *Marginalia*.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 440.

<sup>5</sup> *English Dramatists of Today*, p. 274.

with probability."<sup>1</sup> Diderot favors the emotional soliloquy, but objects to its being lengthy. Dr. Arnold's quotation: "Man speaks to himself only in moments of perplexity,"<sup>2</sup> is incomplete, as Diderot adds: "If long, it sins against the nature of dramatic action, which it holds in suspense too much."<sup>3</sup> Nicolai prefers the emotional monolog to a colorless conversation with a confidant.<sup>4</sup> Mendelssohn is especially enthusiastic about that type of soliloquy in which violent inner conflict precedes a final decision, but demands natural artless expression in all emotional soliloquies.<sup>5</sup> Though Freytag in his authoritative dramaturgic work is rather unfriendly to the soliloquy, he is willing to tolerate the introspective soliloquy, provided that it has dramatic structure and direct bearing upon the action. He insists that it must contain "Satz, Gegensatz, Ergebnis und zwar Schlussergebnis, das für die Handlung selbst Bedeutung gewinnt."<sup>6</sup> J. J. Engel made the same demand as early as 1774: "The monolog must be really dramatic—monologs which bring about an important change in the frame of mind of the character, and by that means in the plot, are commendable."<sup>7</sup>

Lessing,<sup>8</sup> following in Diderot's footsteps, is a warm admirer of the emotional soliloquy. A. W. von Schlegel demands that every emotional soliloquy be cast in the dialog form, that it be *sich mit sich selbst besprechen*,<sup>9</sup> as though the character were divided into two persons. Hebbel insists upon the same characteristic: "Monologs are only proper when there is dualism in the individual, so that the two persons who at other times ought to be on the stage seem to be active in his breast."<sup>10</sup> According to Hegel<sup>11</sup> all introspective soliloquies are justified,

<sup>1</sup> The Whole Art of the Stage, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> P. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Oeuvres complètes, Paris, 1875; Belles Lettres IV, Chap. XVII.

<sup>4</sup> F. Nicolai, Abhandlung vom Trauerspiele, Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste, Vol. I, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> Gesammelte Schriften, 1843, Vol. I, p. 321 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Technik des Dramas, p. 192 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Schriften, 1802, Vol. 4, p. 228. For this and a few other citations I am indebted to the scholarly monograph of F. Düsel.

<sup>8</sup> Hamburgische Dramaturgie, 48. Stück.

<sup>9</sup> Sämtliche Werke, Leipzig, 1846, VII, 50.

<sup>10</sup> Tagebücher, II, 2971, ed. by Werner, Berlin, 1904.

<sup>11</sup> Aesthetik, Vol. III. Quoted by R. v. Gottschall in Zur Kritik des modernen Dramas, Berlin, 1900, Chap. on Der Monolog im Drama, p. 112.

whether they are calmly reflective or rent by inner conflict. Vischer,<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, demands *Affekt* i. e. emotion. Among other admirers I might mention Mundt,<sup>2</sup> Gartelmann,<sup>3</sup> Schlag,<sup>4</sup> Gottschall,<sup>5</sup> Ludwig,<sup>6</sup> Delius,<sup>7</sup> Kilian.<sup>7</sup>

Contemporary opinion as mirrored in the modern naturalistic dramas appears distinctly hostile to the dramatic soliloquy, this hostility manifesting itself in ostracizing the once welcome assistant. Gottschall, an ardent admirer of the soliloquy, sums up the present condition as follows: "From the Berlin Sinai ten new commandments are announced to the kneeling populace. And to these ten belongs the following: Thou shalt no longer write monologs!"<sup>8</sup> But this new state of affairs is not without precedents. As Dr. Arnold points out, Corneille, more than two centuries ago, discarded the soliloquy in the greater part of his later works and comments upon the fact in the introduction to his works, thus showing that it was premeditated and not accidental.<sup>9</sup> Molière's masterpieces also contain practically no soliloquies, his "Impromptu," the "Critique" and the "Comtesse d'Escarbagnnes" having none at all. German literature furnishes us a precedent in the dramas of the pupils and followers of Gottsched, especially those of Johann Elias Schlegel and Frau Gottsched. Gottsched's "Deutsche Schaubühne"<sup>10</sup> consists for the greater part of plays in which soliloquies and asides are entirely avoided.<sup>11</sup> Why did their departure from traditional dramatic technic fail to influence succeeding dramatists? Why could they not exert the same influence that Ibsen through his technic has exerted upon the playwrights of practically every modern language? Pri-

<sup>1</sup> Aesthetik, Stuttgart, 1857, Vol. IV, p. 1392.

<sup>2</sup> Theodor Mundt, Dramaturgie, Berlin, 1848, p. 138 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Dramatik, Berlin, 1892, p. 169 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Das Drama, p. 306 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Zur Kritik des modernen Dramas, Berlin, 1900, pp. 109-127.

<sup>6</sup> Otto Ludwig, Shakespeare-Studien, ed. by M. Heydrich, 1874, Nachlasschriften, Vol. II, p. 105.

<sup>7</sup> Arnold, p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>9</sup> Arnold, p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> Leipzig, 1740-1745.

<sup>11</sup> Rudolf Franz, Der Monolog und Ibsen, p. 32.

marily and chiefly because contemporary and succeeding dramatists (and incidentally audiences) did not question the convention of the soliloquy. Then, too, the small intrinsic worth of the plays militated against their being used as models by other dramatists. For some years past, however, the dramatic soliloquy has been subjected to criticism, which received added stimulus from the new technic of Ibsen's powerful plays. But when a convention is attacked and becomes the topic of dispute, its days are numbered. As Paull so aptly expresses it: "A convention that is questioned is doomed; its existence depends upon its unhesitating acceptance."<sup>1</sup>

The drama has its conventions as well as every other art. A convention is an implied pact between the artist and his patrons to accept certain variations from real life as absolutely essential means of expression.<sup>2</sup> To enjoy an opera we must accept the convention that all the characters express themselves through the medium of song; in sculpture we do not look for color (although Klinger has favored the world of art with a few colored statues); in paintings motion is out of the question. Dramatic convention, then, is an agreement between the author and the public, between those before the curtain and those behind it, to accept variations from real life off the stage as a part of the game. Among the conventions of the drama some are essential, and these may be termed permanent because of their enduring qualities. Others, however, have changed from age to age; after being used for a time they have been discarded, and these might be called temporary conventions. Among the permanent conventions are the removal of the fourth wall of the room so that we can see what is taking place, the raising of the actors' voices so that we can hear them, the elucidation of the plot so that we can follow it, making the action much more compact than it would be in life, the condensation of the dialog, as we have only a short time in the theater. Some of the temporary conventions are the use of prose, verse, rime, assonance and the soliloquy. The latter has been so tenacious a convention, that one might well say that it has been

<sup>1</sup> Fortnightly Review, May, 1899, p. 870.

<sup>2</sup> Brander Matthews, *The Development of the Drama*, p. 2 ff.

demoted to the temporary division after being at home in the other division for centuries.

The dramatic soliloquy, then, is a convention and is not based on real life. As generally stated, this variation from life, this convention, permits an actor who believes himself to be alone on the stage to make his thoughts audible so that the audience hears them and becomes acquainted with what would otherwise be unknown to them. In other words, "an actor soliloquizing must be supposed to be thinking aloud."<sup>1</sup> Does this statement regarding the underlying principle of the monolog cover the ground and include all types? It would seem that only the introspective soliloquies, those that reveal thought and feeling, are taken care of. The expository soliloquy, which conveys information regarding the plot or the characters to the audience, is not provided for in that definition. I should formulate the principle underlying the expository soliloquy as follows: The speaker loses his personality for the time being, becomes the mouthpiece of the author, and, while talking to himself (in reality to the audience), conveys to the audience such information as the author desires; whereas the introspective monolog is highly subjective and vibrant with the speaker's personality, the expository type is colorless, objective and impersonal.

Given the problem of reducing the dramatic soliloquy to its lowest terms, the investigator would doubtless find the result to be, broadly speaking, the soliloquy conveying information and the soliloquy revealing thought and emotion. Classified according to their underlying convention, the former might be termed verbal soliloquy, the latter a thought soliloquy. Lastly, their relation to the audience differs, inasmuch as the soliloquy conveying information always implies a consciousness of the audience, especially so in its crude use in early German drama, while the thought soliloquy never implies a knowledge of the spectators.

The soliloquy that imparts information has played a most important rôle in the construction of the drama, especially at the beginning, where it performs the important office of putting

<sup>1</sup> Brander Matthews, *Concerning the Soliloquy*, Putnam's Monthly, Nov., 1906.



the audience in touch with the author, of bridging over the chasm between author and spectator. The spectators, in order to understand the action, must be made aware of certain facts concerning the characters and the plot; they must become acquainted with certain events that have occurred before the play begins. The task of conveying such information, known as exposition, may be undertaken by monolog or dialog. The former is a labor saving device, fulfilling its task with ease and despatch, but critics from Hédelin down to the present time have pronounced it crude, unnatural, a lame makeshift, an insult to the intelligence of the audience. The latter, on the other hand, though slower and more difficult, is the more artistic method. The expository soliloquy was a favorite device with German dramatists before Hauptmann, Holz, Sudermann, and other members of the modern naturalistic school, not only at the beginning of the play but throughout its course. In a play the author is often confronted with the necessity of imparting some specific piece of information to the audience in order to prevent confusion, and without compunction he resorts to the least taxing and simplest method, viz., the expository soliloquy. It may describe some event: a battle, a murder, or what not, that has occurred off the stage during the progress of the play or is occurring back of the scenes; it may be narrative, identifying, self-characterizing, or it may be employed to reveal the plans and intentions of the speaker. No matter when explanation is necessary, the expository soliloquy is ready and willing to jump into the breach. The different types of expository soliloquy may be classified as follows: 1. introductory exposition, 2. identification, 3. self-characterization, 4. narration, 5. description, 6. intention.

Naturally the purest and least adulterated forms of the expository soliloquy are found among the early dramatists, the authors of church plays, Hans Sachs, and his contemporaries, handicapped as they were by a very crude technic and but a step removed from the epic style. To be sure we find examples of the baldly expository soliloquy throughout German dramatic literature (except in the naturalistic drama of today, as previously stated), but generally some attempt is made to

render it more plausible by giving it an emotional admixture or an individual touch.

The introductory expositional soliloquy supplies the audience with such information regarding the plot and the characters as is necessary for following the story intelligently. Before Gryphius the majority of plays began with this short cut; beginning with him, however, the dialog opening was the preferred method of attack. We find introductory expositional soliloquies in two of Gryphius's plays, "Carolus Stuardus" and "Papinianus," in Lessing's "Philotas" and "Emilia Galotti," in Schiller's prolog to "Die Jungfrau von Orleans," in Goethe's "Iphigenie" and in his "Faust," although there is a large admixture of other elements in both the latter, in Grillparzer's "Ahnfrau," "Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen," and "Der Traum ein Leben," in Hebbel's "Michelangelo" and "Agnes Bernauer." More than forty of Sach's shrovetide plays and many of his comedies and tragedies furnish uncontaminated examples of this type.

The soliloquy employed to identify the speaker generally occurs at the beginning of the play, but it is not confined to that position. The church plays furnish numerous examples: "I am Abel, who was murdered by his brother"—"I am Isaiah, one of the prophets."<sup>1</sup> The shrovetide plays of the fifteenth century, Hans Sachs, and many others, use this same naïve type: "I am called Mr. Tannheuser, my name is known far and wide," "I am called Eulenspiegel and am known throughout Germany."<sup>2</sup> In Iphigenie's opening speech Goethe makes use of this type, yet with what a world of consummate skill!

The self-characterizing type is an outgrowth of the previous type and is often added to it. After the speaker has told his name, he goes on to give a frank recital of his characteristics. So, e. g., Eulenspiegel, after introducing himself, proceeds to discuss his innate knavery and to illustrate it. We find this type in classical and nineteenth century drama, but there it has been raised to a higher plane. The villain makes use of it to disclose his real vicious self, e. g., Franz Moor in "Die Räu-

<sup>1</sup> Redentiner Osterspiel, ed. by T. Froning, pp. 133, 134.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Sachs, Fastnachtspiele.

ber," Marwood in "Miss Sara Sampson," Adelheid in "Götz," Zawisch in "König Ottokars Glück und Ende." Occasionally, however, a frank bit of self-characterization is met with; Siegfried indulging in it in Hebbel's "Genoveva."<sup>1</sup> A more highly developed technic allows the audience to draw its own conclusions as to the actor's character, which displays itself both in dialog and in soliloquies of an introspective nature.

Descriptive and narrative soliloquies occur in such numbers in the early period that they make the plays fairly topheavy. Nor are they infrequent in the later plays. A good example of the soliloquy which describes events that are going on simultaneously off the stage occurs in "Emilia Galotti,"<sup>2</sup> when Marinelli stands at the window and keeps the audience posted as to what is going on outside. There is one instance even in Hauptmann, Rektor Besenmeyer repeating part of the service in the adjoining church.<sup>3</sup> Ordinary descriptive and narrative soliloquies that contain only a bald recital of facts are not frequent, but almost every dramatist contributes one or more examples. In "Minna von Barnhelm" Werner delivers a soliloquy which is filled with frankly narrative material,<sup>4</sup> in "Käthchen von Heilbronn" the Count<sup>5</sup> and the Emperor<sup>6</sup> deliver narrative speeches. Eugenie's speech in "Die natürliche Tochter" will illustrate the descriptive type.<sup>7</sup>

The soliloquy that explains the plans and intentions of the speaker may be either complete in itself, or it may be merely an appendage of another soliloquy, usually of the narrative type. Werner's previously quoted speech ends in this manner, as do several soliloquies in "Götz."<sup>8</sup> Franz Moor's diabolical soliloquy at the beginning of Act 2 is a splendid example of how this type can be infused with dramatic life, by showing us the mental processes which led up to the formulation of the

<sup>1</sup> Act I, Sc. 1, end.

<sup>2</sup> Act, 3, Sc. 2. Also Lessing: Nathan, Act II, Sc. 1, beginning.

<sup>3</sup> Florian Geyer, Act 3, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Act III, Sc. 6, entire.

<sup>5</sup> Act IV, Sc. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Act V, Sc. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Act V, Sc. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Act 1, Sc. 2; Act I, end.

plan. Even the simple statement of a plan is made highly effective when delivered under emotional stress, as in Ferdinand's speech in "Kabale und Liebe."<sup>1</sup>

The introspective soliloquy is the medium for expressing the thoughts and feelings of the actor. In contradistinction to its shiftless relative, the expository soliloquy, which it is hard to defend, the introspective soliloquy might be termed the true soliloquy, as it makes known to us thoughts and emotions that would otherwise remain hidden. "It lets a tortured hero unpack his heart; it opens a window into his soul; and it gives the spectator a pleasure not to be had otherwise. It allows us to listen to the communing of a character with himself, as though we were not overhearing what he is saying."<sup>2</sup>

The thought soliloquy may be subdivided into reflective, moralizing, and deliberative. The emotional soliloquy may express any one of the emotions as anger, fear, love, hate, joy, grief, despair, shame, jealousy, revenge, longing, contempt, disgust, irritation.

In the reflective soliloquy the speaker's thought is turned back upon past experiences or ideas and his attitude toward them made clear. Tell's famous soliloquy<sup>3</sup> before he murders Gessler splendidly illustrates this type. It usually occurs at the conclusion of a dialog when the actor who is alone on the stage reverts to the matters just touched upon in the conversation and acquaints the audience with the thought or thoughts uppermost in his mind, in other words, his mental reaction. So Pylades, after his conversation with Iphigenie, Act 2, Sc. 2: "She seemed greatly moved by the fate of the royal house. Whoever she may be, she has known the king well, and fortunately for us, has been sold to this place from a noble family. Be quiet, dear heart, and let us steer courageously toward the star of hope that shines for us." Lessing's dramas show a fondness for this type, several examples occurring in almost every play.

The moralizing soliloquy goes a step further than the reflective, as it indulges in moral reflections and draws practical les-

<sup>1</sup> Act I, end.

<sup>2</sup> Brander Matthews, *A Study of the Drama*, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Act 4, Sc. 3.

sons from past experiences, thus introducing a conscious didactic strain. The early plays from the serious dramas of Sachs through the dramas of the reformation have a large admixture of this moralizing element. Virtue and vice, right and wrong, are the pegs upon which these little sermons are hung. In the philosophical soliloquy a wider field is drawn upon, abstract ideas rather than the concrete are at the basis of the musing. Faust's immortal reveries, Primislaus in "Libussa,"<sup>1</sup> Wallenstein on custom,<sup>2</sup> Sappho's beautiful outbursts,<sup>3</sup> Attinghausen on the passing of the good old days,<sup>4</sup>—these are some of the splendid examples that can be found in German literature.

The deliberative soliloquy considers and examines the reasons for and against a proposition, it estimates the weight and force of arguments, it views the probable consequences of an action in order to reach a decision. Nathan's soliloquy<sup>5</sup> just prior to his interview with Saladin, and Posa's speech<sup>6</sup> in a similar situation show this calm examination of the pros and cons. Very often, however, there is a considerable admixture of emotion in this type, and in that case the speaker reveals an inner conflict. Where thought is subordinated to, and outweighed by, feeling the soliloquy will be referred to as a conflict soliloquy. Odoardo's soliloquy, Act 5, Sc. 4,<sup>7</sup> not only illustrates the subordination of thought to passion, but calls attention to it: "Aber sieh da! Schon wieder; schon wieder rennet der Zorn mit dem Verstande davon"—and then begins to examine the possibilities calmly. Other examples are Moor's "to be or not to be,"<sup>8</sup> Fiesco's soliloquies in the second<sup>9</sup> and third acts,<sup>10</sup> Philotas's outburst in the fourth scene,<sup>11</sup> the soliloquy of the Tempelherr, Act 5, Sc. 3.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Act III, Sc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Wallenstein's Tod, Act I, Sc. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Act III, Sc. 1. Act IV, Sc. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Wilhelm Tell, Act II, Sc. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Act III, Sc. 6, in Nathan der Weise.

<sup>6</sup> Don Carlos, Act III, Sc. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Emilia Galotti.

<sup>8</sup> Die Räuber, Act IV, Sc. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Act II, Sc. 19.

<sup>10</sup> Act III, Sc. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Wilhelm Tell, Act II, Sc. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Nathan der Weise.

As the term "emotional soliloquy" is not subject to misinterpretation, and as even one example for each of the numerous emotions would take up altogether too much space, further discussion is not necessary.

It is a generally accepted theory that the stage, architecturally speaking, has exerted an unmistakable influence upon the drama.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the form of the stage of a certain period has to a large extent determined the form of the play. The soliloquy is an example of this influence, as the close proximity of the spectators to the actors on the stage of the early epochs produced an atmosphere of intimacy which made the expository soliloquy seem perfectly in place. The stage of today, set apart from the audience and supplied with remarkable scenic and lighting effects, produces such an air of naturalness, of *vraisemblance*, that the expository speech seems altogether out of place. The lack of stage settings in the earliest period and poor illumination later on, made explanation of "business" on the stage necessary. Many actions on the stage would have been unintelligible to the spectators had not the actor explained what he was doing. To illustrate: in Sachs's shrovetide play "The Peasant in Purgatory," the farmer, after being drugged, is to be thrown into a dark cell. Another actor carries him on the stage, lays him down and announces that the farmer is now in the cell. Immediately after that the peasant according to stage directions "clears his throat, gets up and gropes about in all directions." Without an explanation the spectators would have difficulty in interpreting his actions and visualizing the scene, therefore an explanatory soliloquy is delivered by the peasant: "Hang it, where am I? What a dark hole this is! I see and hear nothing here. I take hold of nothing but four stone walls," etc. In the last analysis, of course, all soliloquies of this type are expository, as they convey information to the audience.

The structural soliloquy, on the other hand, is primarily a mechanical device whose function it is to prevent friction in the wheelwork of the drama, a lubricant as it were. One vari-

<sup>1</sup> Freytag, *Technik des Dramas*, 10th ed., p. 160.

ety of the structural soliloquy is referred to by Düsel<sup>1</sup> as the *Pausenfüllmonolog*, which is employed to fill a gap between the exit of one player and the entrance of another. Dr. Arnold refers to this as the link soliloquy, and adds two other varieties: the entrance and exit soliloquy. The entrance soliloquy "prevents the simultaneous appearance of A at one door and B at the other. Even though they were meeting by appointment, they probably would not arrive at the same instant. So A comes on a moment before B, and fills the interval with some remark."<sup>2</sup> The exit soliloquy was used at the end of an act to prevent the awkwardness resulting from several people leaving the stage at the same time. One accordingly remained behind and delivered a short speech. The drop curtain of course made these two types unnecessary, as it may rise or fall on an assembled group. Both the entrance and exit soliloquy are infrequent in German drama, as the early playwrights had no compunctions about allowing two or more characters to enter and leave simultaneously. In Sachs, e. g., the stereotyped stage direction at the end of the act is, "they both depart, or they all depart." At the beginning of an act we find either an expositional soliloquy or the simultaneous entrance of two or more characters. In the plays of Heinrich Julius there are a few examples of entrance and exit soliloquy, e. g., in "Buhler und Buhlerin," II, 2; II, 5; IV, 7, but even in these there is an admixture of the expositional element. The unwillingness to have the stage empty or to have a pause between the exit of one actor and the entrance of another is responsible for the link soliloquy. Lessing was fond of this device, especially in his early plays, as Düsel points out. In his plays the form is rather stereotyped: a brief reference to what has preceded followed by an announcement of the approach of a character—ha, there he is!

The link soliloquy as such is shortlived. Lessing in his later plays and succeeding dramatists transformed the structural device into an integral part of the play by making it the vehicle

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 22-25, 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 81.

for reflections on the preceding scene, i. e., a reflective or thought soliloquy.

After the preceding classification and definitions, just a word as to the scope and purpose of this investigation. It will be in the main a portrayal of the career of a dramatic convention, the soliloquy, as manifested in German drama from its infancy, i. e., the church plays, to the present time. Although principally a historical study, the investigation will attempt to throw light on the question whether the recent drama has, or has not, gained in artistic effectiveness by its gradual disuse of the soliloquy. Two questions then will be answered: 1. What rôle does the soliloquy play in the technic of the various German dramatists? 2. Is dramatic technic improved by the elimination of the soliloquy?



## CHAPTER I

### EARLY INDIGENOUS DRAMA

#### I. *Medieval Church Plays*

Moralizing embodied in a dramatic spectacle is less odious and vastly more effective than a sermon from a pulpit. Realizing this, the priests fostered the different types of religious drama which had their origin in the various church festivals. The germs of the Easter play, e. g., are found in the Catholic ritual and consist of four sentences that are chanted by two semi-choruses representing the three Marys who visit Christ's tomb and the angels who tell them that Christ has risen. These sentences form the basis of the Latin Easter play, which in turn gave rise to a Latin-German form, in which the Latin speeches were translated into German for the benefit of the uneducated spectators, and finally resulted in plays that were almost entirely German. The last mentioned gave rise to the unwieldy passion plays, which sometimes lasted three to four days and required several hundred actors.<sup>1</sup>

The plays were at first performed in the church, but as they grew to such dimensions that the church could no longer accommodate them, they were taken to an open air stage that was usually set up in the market place. The stage<sup>2</sup> was a large wooden platform, somewhat longer than it was wide, which was not raised far from the ground, so that all parts of it were visible to the standing or sitting spectators. It represented all the places which were necessary in the action, such as houses, gardens, cities, castles, etc. Naturally, these are only indicated, and that in the crudest manner, so that even in the fifteenth century the top of a mountain, the roof of the temple and hell were all represented by a barrel. The actors were visible throughout the entire play. At the beginning of

<sup>1</sup> R. Froning, *Das Drama des Mittelalters*, in 3 vols., Vol. I, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 266 ff.

the play, or rather just previous to the opening, the actors march upon the stage in solemn procession and sit down in their appointed places, which they leave only when the play requires their presence elsewhere.

The dramatic art was as crude as the stage and its settings. The whole treatment was epic rather than dramatic and the author's main concern was to get the story across. Selection of essentials, compression of the plot or dialog did not trouble the playwrights, as they believed in describing everything in the greatest detail.

In one respect the author of a church play was decidedly better off than later playwrights: there was no need of introductory exposition as his audience was familiar with biblical lore. The only difficulty he faced was to let the audience know who the characters were that appeared in the play. This he did in the least taxing manner by having every character about whom there was any doubt simply tell the spectators who he was, in other words, by employing the identifying soliloquy. To be sure this is an elastic use of the term, for, strictly speaking, these speeches are addressed directly to the audience and therefore are not soliloquies. This also applies to the narrative soliloquies of which there are a few examples,<sup>1</sup> and to those expressing the speaker's intention. Illustrations of the identifying soliloquy are numerous: "Redentiner Oster-spiel," 260 ff., 685 ff.; "Wiener Passionsspiel," 65 ff.; "Alsfelder Passionspiel," 7189 ff.; and in every "Krämerscene" the different characters are introduced in this manner. Occasionally a bit of self-characterization is added as in the "Alsfelder" play, 1253 ff. The Redentin play has two good examples of the intentional speech: 250 ff. where Jesus tells of his plan to go to hell and release Adam and Eve and the holy fathers, and 1950 ff. where Lucifer discloses his plan of catching all sinners and bringing them to hell.

Real emotional soliloquies, however, do occur, although not in great numbers. The type in which the speaker is so overcome with emotion that he is entirely oblivious of his surroundings is on the whole more frequent than the type in

<sup>1</sup> Trierer Oster-spiel, 161-5, Vol. I, p. 55. Alsfelder Passionspiel, 3622-27, Vol. 3, p. 701.

which the speaker is alone. Those who object that a character can not be alone as all the actors are on the stage must remember that the action moves from place to place and that any one station with its group of actors constitutes the stage for the time being and the remainder becomes non-existent. So, when Peter in the "Frankfurter Passionsspiel," after denying that he knows Christ, leaves the house to deliver a soliloquy of remorse,<sup>1</sup> that part of the platform for the time being becomes an empty stage and he is alone on the stage. The same applies to Judas, who delivers a stirring soliloquy of remorse<sup>2</sup> while going away to commit suicide. The stage directions read: "Judas throws the coins on the ground and goes out to hang himself, saying on the way etc." Neither one of these soliloquies implies the least consciousness of the audience and are accordingly real soliloquies. In the "Alsfelder Passionsspiel" Peter is also alone when delivering his soliloquy of remorse,<sup>3</sup> as the stage directions read: "Peter leaves weeping bitterly and withdraws from Christ and says." The speech, however, is not as effective as in the Frankfurt play. Judas's speech of remorse<sup>4</sup> in the Alsfeld play on the other hand is weakened by being partly addressed to the audience: "O friends, now hear my complaint, which I am about to indulge in! I was one of the twelve apostles; I have betrayed my lord and master and sold him to the Jews! Therefore I shall now commit suicide,"<sup>4</sup>—then he begins his lament as follows: "Oh God that I was ever born," etc. But for the introduction it would be a true soliloquy. Every "Marienklage" illustrates the type of emotional soliloquy, which shows the speaker entirely oblivious to his surroundings. Other examples are Mary Magdalen's soliloquies of remorse and regret in the Frankfurt<sup>5</sup> and Alsfeld plays,<sup>6</sup> Lucifer's soliloquy of anxiety<sup>7</sup> at Satan's long absence in the Redentin play, and his outburst of remorse<sup>8</sup> later in the same play.

<sup>1</sup> 2614 ff.

<sup>2</sup> 2650 ff.

<sup>3</sup> 3594 ff.

<sup>4</sup> 3622 ff.

<sup>5</sup> 1076 ff.

<sup>6</sup> 1994 ff.

<sup>7</sup> 1691 ff.

<sup>8</sup> 1928 ff.

Grief, regret and remorse are the emotions most often represented in the soliloquies. There is one splendid example of the gloating villain in the Alsfeld play,<sup>1</sup> where Satan, after causing the death of the Baptist, steps forth and shouts: "Oho, oho! I have seen that my wish has been carried out: the man has been murdered though innocent." The thought soliloquy does not occur independently, but occasionally as a part of another type. In one of Lucifer's soliloquies of remorse this bit of moralizing is incorporated: "This is the result of pride! Pride is the beginning of all sin, pride has lowered us devils to the abyss."<sup>2</sup> At rare intervals there is also a reflective bit very much in the nature of an aside, e. g., in the Frankfurt play after Christ has spoken a few lines of Latin, Lieberman Rabi says: "We are all surprised that Christ can speak Latin, although he never attended school! It strikes me that that is not proper."<sup>3</sup>

The soliloquy which explains "business" or actions on the stage is not pressed into service very often, as most of the actions are perfectly intelligible to the spectators. Additional precautions are taken by having a person not in the play interrupt it occasionally and tell the audience just what scene will be presented next, together with its contents, e. g., Augustinus in the Frankfurt play. In unusual cases explanation becomes necessary, as when Lucifer looks for Christ's soul after the death on the cross,<sup>4</sup> and when the earth quakes after Christ's death.<sup>5</sup> The peculiar part of the latter description is that it begins in the present tense and after one sentence continues in the past tense as though the speaker were quoting some one else.

## 2. *Shrovetide Plays of the 15th Century*<sup>6</sup>

German secular drama has its origin in the carnival mummeries which were a popular form of amusement during the

<sup>1</sup> 1040 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Redentin play, 1946 ff.

<sup>3</sup> 850 ff.

<sup>4</sup> 4151 ff.

<sup>5</sup> 4156 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *Fastnachtspiele aus dem 15. Jahrhundert*, a collection of 121 plays ed. by Dr. Keller, Stuttgart, 1853.

few days before Lent with its long period of enforced sobriety. Throngs of masked citizens paraded through the cities and entered private residences, inns and bar-rooms, where they sought to evoke laughter by mimicking certain types that embodied ludicrous characteristics. Mimicry was soon supplemented by the spoken word, and the boorish peasant, the arrogant knight, the immoral priest and others are held up to ridicule in satiric speeches. The crudest type consists of a series of identifying and self-characterizing speeches. The masked actors enter together, each delivers a self-characterizing speech and they depart after being dined and wined. Then there are court scenes in which cases of every description are tried in a farcical manner, usually complaints against unfaithful husbands, which, however, did not result in divorces. Doctor scenes are also quite common in which a quack, after boasting of his skill and his marvellous cures, gives the patient some ludicrous prescription. Everyday life furnishes most of the themes but serious matters dealing with religious and social conditions are not tabooed. In fact it is sometimes difficult to tell where the religious play ends and the carnival play begins, as the latter has encroached so far upon the domain of the former.<sup>1</sup>

Very few of the shrovetide plays were performed on the stage, or rather platform, such as was used for church plays. Froning states that the more serious plays such as Nos. 111 and 119 in Keller required a stage. All others got along without stage or scenery, as they were repeated in places where such things were out of the question. The prolog of the first play in Keller throws an interesting light upon the average place of performance and the simple preparations.

Real soliloquies do not occur in these plays, although we might term the identifying, self-characterizing, narrative and descriptive speeches crude expository soliloquies. Some of the plays in which there is a crude plot are developed entirely by means of dialog: Nos. 22, 37, 111. The last named deals with the legend of Pope Joan and is a good example of the

<sup>1</sup> Froning, Vol. 3, pp. 955 ff.; E. Devrient, *Geschichte der deutschen Schauspielkunst*, 1848, Vol. I, p. 96 ff.

blending of religious and secular drama. Gottsched calls it "das älteste tragische gedruckte deutsche Originalstück."<sup>1</sup> In No. 57, entitled "Ain guot Vasnachtspil" there are three asides in the dialog, possibly the earliest use of this device.

### 3. *Drama of the Reformation*

Almost everywhere the medieval church drama was put to utter rout by the Reformation, first because the Protestants objected to it as a Catholic institution, and secondly because the times were too stormy to permit people to sit calmly and enjoy the epic meanderings of the church plays. The drama that took its place was used principally as a weapon of attack and defense, especially by the Protestants, against religious adversaries. Epic treatment and endless sermonizing coupled with the exposition of the Lutheran doctrine characterize these plays. The stage and the scenery was crude and virtually that of the church plays, and the plays were given in churches, schools and public squares.

Some of the plays, such as "Die Totenfresser"<sup>2</sup> by Gengenbach, required no stage or setting and were probably performed on the street. Gengenbach occupied a unique position in the drama of this period, as he began in the Catholic camp and ended as a rabid champion of the Reformation. His "Zehn Alter dieser Welt"<sup>3</sup> is permeated by the Catholic doctrine, while the "Totenfresser" is a bitter attack upon the practice of giving masses for the souls of the departed. The gist of the latter is that the only ones that benefit by these masses are the pope and the clergy, who are able to live in luxurious ease from the proceeds. The play is utterly undramatic and is to all intents and purposes a series of expository soliloquies which set forth the views of the adherents and opponents of the Catholic church.

"Der Ablasskrämer"<sup>4</sup> is not much more dramatic and con-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, p. 82, quoted by Keller.

<sup>2</sup> Das Drama der Reformationszeit, ed. by R. Froning, Stuttgart, pp. 3-10, date 1525.

<sup>3</sup> In Keller: Fastnachtspiele des 15. Jahrhunderts.

<sup>4</sup> Froning, p. 13 ff., date, 1525.

sists of a series of denunciations hurled at the salesman by those whom he has formerly duped. Oratorical attacks are supplemented by physical assaults and the vender is compelled to admit all his shameful practices. A reflective soliloquy near the end of the play shows him a sadder but wiser man.

"Der verlorene Sohn"<sup>1</sup> by Waldis is the oldest Protestant drama based upon a biblical theme and paved the way for a host of imitations, the prodigal son soon becoming a favorite theme with dramatists. Besides being a "Tendenzdrama" it has a special point of interest in the fact that it is the first German drama that shows influences of the Roman drama by the division into acts, the introduction of riotous scenes with the meretrices and the deceptive innkeeper. The introductory expositional soliloquy is addressed to the audience, the other expositional speeches avoid this crudity. Several asides by the innkeeper as he plucks the prodigal possibly show Latin influence. There is but one emotional soliloquy, an outburst of sorrowful regret by the prodigal after he has been plucked.

"Susanna"<sup>2</sup> by Rebhuhn is the earliest German play that shows "a conscious striving for artistic effects of poetic form and dramatic construction."<sup>3</sup> The play is divided into five acts and has a prolog, epilog and chorus at the end of the first four acts. Of all the Susanna plays this is the best and the most effective, as it is the simplest. A long expositional soliloquy which reveals the villainy of a rich rascal and the corruptness of the judges is interesting, as it is introduced solely to characterize the venality of the bench. On the whole then the technic of the soliloquy in these plays is on the same level as in the church plays.

#### 4. *Hans Sachs*

The early shrovetide plays of Sachs were undoubtedly presented in inns and private homes, as were those of the 15th century, and probably the same method of presentation prevailed. The later plays may possibly have been presented on the stage used for the larger plays, i. e., the so-called comedies

<sup>1</sup> Froning, p. 31 ff., date 1527.

<sup>2</sup> Froning, p. 101 ff., date 1536.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin Thomas, *German Literature*, p. 158.

and tragedies. The latter were performed for the most part in churches, the regular rendezvous of the mastersingers, on crude stages erected for this purpose.<sup>1</sup> But as early as 1550 the mastersingers built the first German theater in Nürnberg for the performance of larger plays, probably realizing the inappropriateness of giving them in churches.<sup>2</sup> Or it is possible that the clergy strenuously objected to such performances in the churches.

The form of the stage of this period is largely a matter of conjecture, although stage directions in the plays throw a little light upon the subject. Very likely then the stage consisted of a platform raised about three feet from the ground and open to the spectators on three sides. A broad partition about six feet high ran across the rear of the stage so as to form a dressing room and wings for the actors. There may have been a real door or merely a curtain through which the actors entered the stage from this enclosed space. The top of this subdivision was open so that the smoke of a conflagration off the stage was visible and the tumult of a battle plainly audible to the spectators; the sides, however, were probably covered so that changes in costume would not be seen.<sup>1</sup> In front of this main stage there was sometimes a lower stage, especially in the theaters upon which the mastersingers may have sung the entr'acte music.<sup>2</sup> There was no scenery or stage-setting of any sort, no curtain to mark the beginning or end of an act; the characters came out upon the stage at the beginning of an act and left it at the conclusion of the act.

Considering the simplicity of the stage and the ease with which one could be erected, it is supposable that the wealthy citizens often entertained their friends by giving theatricals in their homes.

The stereotyped form with which the comedies and tragedies begin is a prolog by the "ernholdt" or herald, who gives the audience a brief synopsis of the play followed by an introductory expository soliloquy. The plays themselves are simply

<sup>1</sup> Anton Glock, *Die Bühne des Hans Sachs*, Passau, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> E. Devrient, *Geschichte der deutschen Schauspielkunst*, Vol. I, p. 113 ff.



stories cast in the dialog form; getting the story across is the main object of the author, who is not concerned with the struggle of one will against another, with the inner processes that give rise to a decision, with the soul-state resulting from a given act. As Freytag puts it: "Nicht die Darstellung einer Begebenheit an sich, sondern ihrer Einwirkung auf die Menschenseele ist Aufgabe der dramatischen Kunst."<sup>1</sup> The plays regularly conclude with a moralizing sermon which is also delivered by the herald.

Almost half of the shrovetide plays have neither prolog or epilog, and in most of the others the prolog has been reduced to a mere formula of greeting, generally: "ein guten abent ir erbarn leut." In the plays that have a prolog a dialog opening is usually employed. Occasionally, especially in the later plays, an expositional soliloquy follows the prolog in the manner of the tragedies and comedies.<sup>2</sup> When Sachs discards the more or less stereotyped prolog he decidedly favors the soliloquy as the vehicle for attack. In more than forty cases soliloquies are used, whereas a dialog opening occurs in only thirteen of the plays, notably in his later productions.<sup>3</sup>

In his later comedies and tragedies there is also a growing tendency to discard the opening soliloquy and employ dialog. In eight comedies written between 1556 and 1560 four have the dialog opening; in eight tragedies of the same period seven begin with dialog.

The introductory expositional soliloquies are generally frankly addressed to the audience, but there are numerous cases where the character is required by the stage directions to talk to himself or herself—"red mit im selb," or "red mit ir selb." The speech itself in this case is usually cast in the same mold as those addressed to the audience and is in no sense a talking to one's self. But there are instances where this expositional speech is raised to a higher artistic level by making it an apostrophe to Fortune, as in "Die schön Marina"—"Great praise and thanks to thee, O Fortune! How richly and abundantly

<sup>1</sup> G. Freytag, *Die Technik des Dramas*, Leipzig, 1905, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Fastnachtspiele*, Nos. 68, 70, 71, 73.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 20, 25, 27, 35, 36, 43, 50, 59, 60, 61, 62, 80, 83.

thou hast provided me with everything so that no sorrow can approach me!" etc. To be sure, the speech gradually sinks to the level of frank exposition, but the attempt to get away from the direct address to the audience is praiseworthy. In "Fortunatus" we find an apostrophe to God in the opening soliloquy: "Oh God in heaven to thee I lament the fact that I spent my young days so foolishly," etc. In "Der teuffel mit dem kauffmann" the apostrophe to Fortune is carried through to the end of the speech, thus producing quite an artistic effect. An emotional admixture is occasionally used to good effect and absolves the soliloquy from the charge that it is addressed to the audience, e. g., in "Das böss weyb mit den worten etc. gut zu machen" and in "Die vier unglückhafften liebhabenden personen." In the former the henpecked husband says: "Alas, poor wretched man that I am, what shall I do? That which is given as a comfort to men troubles my life most. Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! alas! alas! wherever I stand and go I have nothing but trouble which only the grave can free me from!"

The soliloquy used for identification, a crude makeshift which occurs so often in the church plays and in the shrovetide plays of the 15th century, is also employed by Sachs. Nor is its use confined to the early plays; on the contrary, it crops to the surface continually. In the earliest of the shrovetide plays, dated 1517, entitled "Das hoffgsindt Veneris" every character introduced himself in this manner:

"Herr Donheuser bin ich genandt,  
Mein nam der ist gar weit erkandt,  
Aus Frankenlandt was ich geborn," etc.

As late as 1553 he used this type in "Der Eulenspiegel mit den blinden," where Eulenspiegel introduces himself as follows:

"Eulenspiegel bin ich genandt," etc.

Expositional soliloquies of the narrative, descriptive, self-characterizing and intentional type occur on practically every page. Whenever the author feels that there is the least doubt about the story being absolutely clear to the audience, a character informs the spectators of his plans and intentions or tells

them of some event that could not be presented on the stage. By means of soliloquies the author answers any possible questions as to the fate or experiences of a given character even before they arise.

The entire absence of scenery frequently makes the explanatory soliloquy necessary, so that the audience may know what the character is doing on the stage, and where he is located. So in "Fortunatus" the character states that he is now in a wild forest (Act 2) or in London (Act 5); in "Der hörnen Seifrit" the hero tells us that he is confronted by a high mountain (Act 3), etc. In "Der baur in dem fegfeur" the peasant gropes blindly about the stage and explains his actions by telling the audience that he is confined in a dark cell.

As all of the author's plays with the exception of a few shrovetide plays serve a moral purpose, as the epilogs of the comedies and tragedies and the concluding speeches of the shrovetide plays show, it is not surprising to find bits of moralizing in some of the soliloquies. One example taken from "Die schön Marina" will illustrate the type: "Unchastity is the most injurious of all vices. Whoever tries it is allured by it; whoever yields to it is choked by it; it weakens the understanding and shortens life, hurts one's reputation, consumes honor and wealth," etc. Other types of the thought soliloquy do not occur. Emotional soliloquies, however, especially those expressing the more common emotions such as grief, sorrow, rage, fear, regret, joy, etc., are met with very frequently.

It is interesting to note that Sachs gave some thought to the performance of his plays, as occasional stage directions will show. To be sure they are for the most part rather crude and one gesture is made to do service for differing emotions, reminding one forcibly of the acting of some of the present operatic stars. Soliloquies are usually without stage directions other than the stereotyped form: "enters and speaks," or "enters and speaks to him—or herself." But now and then the character is asked to clap the hands together above the head to express sorrow or grief or anger or what not. In Krimhilt's soliloquy at the end of "Seifrit" the author is liberal with stage directions: "She takes the twigs off of the corpse and

beats her hands above her head"; then, a little later, "she sinks upon him, embraces and kisses him"; and later, "she sees the dagger, picks it up, looks at it, and says." At the end of the speech she leaves "sadly." The attempt to make the performance a little realistic certainly redounds to the credit of the author.

##### 5. *Herzog Heinrich Julius von Braunschweig*

English drama, even in the crude form in which it was introduced to the Germans by the "Englische Komödianten," exerted a great influence upon German drama, especially upon Duke Heinrich's and Jakob Ayrer's plays. The Duke and Landgrave Maurice of Hessa each had a troop of English players and each was stimulated to the point of writing plays for these actors. Maurice, whose plays have been lost, even built a theater that was modeled after the type then in vogue in England. The Duke's plays show that he also adopted the English stage, whose chief characteristics were a balcony above the rear of the stage and the curtaining off of the space under the balcony, so that it could be employed when a change in the scene was desired.<sup>1</sup> More attention had been given to the art of acting in England than in Germany, and the plays of the English comedians are filled with elaborate stage-directions whose aim it was to secure great realism in presentation, especially when grief, pain and despair were to be depicted. All of the Duke's plays show his indebtedness in this respect, as they are abundantly supplied with stage-directions. English influence is also discernible in the use of prose, the introduction of instrumental music, songs and dances, and lastly in the adoption of the clown.

The soliloquies in the plays of the English comedians are very crude.<sup>2</sup> The characters often introduce themselves and speak at length about their plans and intentions. Sometimes these soliloquies are only indicated, e. g., in "Der König von Schottland," Act IV. The stage directions read: "The king comes out and tells how he is going to get to the place where Run-cifax lives, whom he intends to ask which of his two daughters

<sup>1</sup> W. Creizenach, *Die Schauspiele der englischen Komödianten*, Vol. 23, D.N.L., p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

he is to get." The villains expose their dark designs in soliloquy and the heroes announce both plans and accomplished facts, and sometimes give reports of actions that the audience has already witnessed. The moralizing soliloquy is frequently employed, but never at great length for fear of tiring the public. Ranting soliloquies in which passion was torn to tatters were also a favorite device.

What did the Duke adopt from this technic of the soliloquy? To secure realistic acting he supplied the soliloquies with full stage-directions in the manner of the English comedians. Then too he occasionally uses the ranting soliloquy, which in those days must have exerted a powerful influence upon the spectators. Good examples occur in the tragedy "Von einem ungerathenen Sohn," VI, end, where Nero is asked to accompany his ranting with such actions as: "grünselt, winselt, krümmt und windet sich, und stellet sich greulich an, brüllet wie ein Ochs, fället zu der Erden, kratzet mit Händen und Füßen von sich, stehet wieder auf und läuft herum, als wenn er gar von Sinnen wäre."<sup>1</sup> Another long speech of this type is found in the last act of "Buhler und Buhlerin," part of which reads: "Pfui dich, du stinkende Hoffart, pfui, du heillose und vergängliche Schminke! O wehe, o wehe, ach was leide ich Angst und Schmerz in meinem Herzen! O ihr Berge, fallet über mich und bedeckt mich! Ach, dass die Erde sich aufthäte und mich verschlänge."<sup>2</sup>

For the most part the expository soliloquies are crude, and often, as in the case of the clown, directly addressed to the audience. Sometimes a moralizing<sup>3</sup> or reflective bit and in one case a lyric prelude<sup>4</sup> raises the soliloquy to a slightly higher plane. The clown's soliloquies are either baldly expository or reflective. In the latter he usually indulges in sardonic laughter<sup>5</sup> at the stupidity or the discomfiture of his master and frequently takes the audience into his confidence and begs them not to betray him.

<sup>1</sup> Julius Tittmann, *Die Schauspiele des Herzog Heinrich Julius*, Leipzig, 1880, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 3. Susanna, p. 111-112, Von einem Edelmann.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 35-6; Von einem Buhler.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 64, 90, 96, 107, etc.

### 6. Jakob Ayrer

Two tendencies characterize Ayrer's work: an endeavor to remain faithful to the tradition of Sachs's dramatic art, together with an attempt to acclimate the histrionic art of the English comedians on the German stage. The result of this amalgamation produced no development in technic but rather a degeneration, as the plays show greater fondness for epic treatment than those of Sachs. To make up for the lack of interest resulting from this undramatic form he introduced elaborate stage processions, court scenes, battles and devil-scenes and reaches a higher plane in stage-effects, especially of the lurid melodramatic type. According to Robertson<sup>1</sup> the plays written between 1593 and 1598 show no English influence, whereas those between 1598 and 1605 reveal the influence of the English comedians. His stage probably consisted of a lower front stage and a raised stage or bridge, under the middle of which there was an opening which might be used for a cave or an additional place of entrance and exit or what not.<sup>2</sup> Rather full stage-directions, the use of the clown as a character in the plays, and instrumental music, all show English influence.

The expository soliloquy is pressed into service on all possible occasions to acquaint the audience with the past, present and future, and little effort is made to raise them above the baldly instructive plane by giving them a reflective or emotional admixture. The moralizing element is usually confined to short sententious bits, although longer speeches do occur.<sup>3</sup> Emotional soliloquies are for the most part outbursts of grief and despair. These outbursts as a rule are rather tame affairs and seldom tear passion to tatters.<sup>4</sup> On the whole then Ayrer's soliloquies are a little cruder than those of Sachs.

<sup>1</sup> J. G. Robertson, *Zur Kritik Jakob Ayres mit besonderer Rücksicht auf sein Verhältnisse zu Hans Sachs und den englischen Komödianten*, Leipzig, 1892.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Comedia von der schönen Sidea*, II, beg. A. von Keller's ed.

<sup>4</sup> Keller, Vol. II, p. 787.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PSEUDO-CLASSIC DRAMA

#### 1. *Gryphius*

There was a complete break with the old dramatic tradition in the 17th century when Andreas Gryphius, the originator of the German artistic drama, introduced the Renaissance tradition into German drama. Nothing in modern drama is based on medieval or 16th century drama. It really has its origin in the "Kunstdrama" of Gryphius, which is patterned after foreign models. The Silesian's model however was not so much Seneca as Vondel, the great Dutch dramatist, who was the leading exponent of the Renaissance tradition in Holland.

Seneca's style exerted an immeasurably greater influence upon Gryphius than his technic. "The technic of the two playwrights shows few points of contact,"<sup>1</sup> says Stachel. How do the two compare in the use of the soliloquy? Seneca, with one or two exceptions, invariably begins with an expository soliloquy which is followed by a commenting chorus. Gryphius begins two of his five tragedies with a dialog, viz., "Leo Armenius" and "Cardenio und Celinde." In the second tragedy "Catherine von Georgien," after a prolog by Eternity in the style of the Church play prologs, the dialog form is employed. In "Carolus Stuardus" and "Papinianus" there are introductory expository soliloquies but neither is followed by a chorus. In Seneca's plays the soliloquy forms a large component part, especially in "Medea," which has more soliloquy than dialog. The Roman poet shows a decided fondness for identifying soliloquies, a character often introducing himself to the audience before he begins a conversation. Another striking characteristic of his soliloquies is their position at the beginning of an act.

<sup>1</sup> Paul Stachel, *Seneca und das deutsche Renaissance-Drama*, Berlin, 1907, p. 270.

In Gryphius the soliloquy does not play so prominent a rôle. Although the length of the soliloquies leaves nothing to be desired, they are not so frequent, there are none of the identifying type, and there is no particular fondness shown for the beginning of an act.

Gryphius was endowed with a most melancholy temperament and the misfortunes that befell him and his country served to heighten this innate gloom. His five tragedies are permeated with pessimism as a result of his despairing outlook upon life. "All is vanity," or "sic transit gloria mundi" is in brief the theme of his plays. His heroes are characterized by steadfastness in enduring adversity rather than by positive action. The bombast and ranting, so characteristic of the plays, as well as the author's dejection and pessimism are faithfully mirrored in the soliloquies.

The initial expositional soliloquy in "Carolus Stuardus" is far from being baldly instructive. Several apostrophes, questions and answers, and an admixture of anger and defiance skillfully place the expositional matter into the background. The author's sermonizing instinct unfortunately got the better of him, and the fine frenzy of the closet dramatist is revealed in the line: "Bebt, die ihr herrscht und schafft! bebt ob dem Trauerspiel!" Once more, later in the play, the stage-illusion is destroyed when he has Fairfax say in a soliloquy: "Wer nah diss Unheil sieht, wer fern diss traurspiel hört." In "Papinianus" the expositional matter is also cleverly cloaked in the initial soliloquy. There is a considerable admixture of philosophical reflection:

"Wer über alle steigt und von der stoltzen höh  
Der reichen ehre schaut, wie schlecht der pövel geh,  
. . . Hat wol (ich geb es nach) viel über die gemein.  
Ach! aber ach! wie leicht nimmt ihn der schwindel ein  
Und blendet unverhofft sein zitterndes gesichte,  
Dass er durch gähen fall wird, ehr man denkt, zu nichte!  
Wie leichte bricht der fels, auf dem er stand gefasst,  
Und reisst ihn mit sich ab!"

Later:



"Wer die gemeine noth  
 Zu lindern sich bemüht, sucht nichts als eignen tod.  
 Wer sich für alle wagt, wird auch nicht einen finden,  
 Auff dessen rechte treu er könn in schiffbruch gründen."

The speech is a real talking to one's self, apostrophe is freely used and in parts the dialog form is successfully employed:

"Was hab ich denn verwürckt, unredliche gemütter?  
 Kommt kläger! tretet vor! entdeckt, wie herb und bitter  
 Auch eure zunge sey! Ich fliehe die gemein  
 (Sprecht ihr) und schliesse mich vor freund und fremden ein.  
 Wahr ists, dass ich," etc.

He takes up the charges one by one and answers them as though his accusers were confronting him.

There are few expository soliloquies in the plays and all have an emotional coating. "Papinianus," V, furnishes a good example of inner conflict, the first time that we meet with this type of soliloquy. It opens with a question of perplexity: "What now?" then takes up the pros and cons, and after a short deliberation the decision is made:

"Ach müssen wir die faust in seinem blute färben?  
 Wir müssen! ach! es sey! Papinian soll sterben."

Another new type is found in "Catherine von Georgien" where Abas in a long soliloquy defends the decision he has made.

Ranting soliloquies in Gryphius are practically synonymous with emotional soliloquies, as he knows no bounds in the depiction of an emotion and regularly tears passion into tatters. In "Catherine" Abas pours forth pages such as the following:

"Princessin! Ach! Princessin! Ach wir brennen!  
 Feuer! Feuer! Feuer! Feuer! Feuer! kracht in diesem hertzen!  
 Wir verlodern, wir verschmelzen, angesteckt durch schwefel-  
 kerten  
 Princessin! schau! princessin! wir bekennen  
 Entzèptert, auf dem kny und mit gewundnen händen,  
 Dass wir unrechtmässig dich betrübet,  
 Dass wir ein stück an dir verübet,  
 Welches aller zeiten zeit wird grausam nennen."

In "Leo Armenius":

"Treuloser aberwitz! durch wahn verführter mann!  
 Undank, dem laster selbst kein laster gleichen kann!  
 Durchteuffeltes gemüth! vermaledeyte sinnen!  
 Die keine redlichkeit noch wohlthat mag gewinnen!  
 Hab ich dich tollen hund vom koth in hof gebracht  
 Und auf selbst-eigner schoss berühmt und gross gemacht?  
 Hat uns die kalte schlang, die jetzund sticht, betrogen?  
 Ist dieser basilisc an unsrer brust erzogen?  
 Warum hat man dich nicht erwürgt auf frischer that?"

The exposition in "Cardenio und Celinde," though apparently in dialog form, is in reality one long soliloquy which is occasionally interrupted by a patient friend who asks for information that he is familiar with. In the same play, in the soliloquy at the beginning of the second act, we find a most interesting defense of the soliloquy, the first and only justification of this convention in German dramatic poetry:

"Was red ich? und mit wem? Wie, wenn die heisse macht  
 Der seuchen uns besiegt, ein zagend hertze schmacht  
 In hart entbrandter glut und die geschwächten sinnen  
 Empfinden nach und nach, wie kraft und geist zerinnen,  
 Indem die innre flamm nunmehr den sitz anfällt,  
 In welchem sich vernunft gleich als beschlossen hält,  
 Denn taumelt der verstand, denn irren die gedanken,  
 Denn zehlt die schwartze zung des abgelebten krancken  
 Viel ungestalte wort in schwerem schwermen her."

In short, when disease or an all-consuming passion weaken body and mind, the mind is clouded and the ideas become confused and the tongue of the unfortunate victim rambles incoherently. Gryphius accordingly believes that a person soliloquizes only when he is in an abnormal condition.

According to Proelss these plays were produced on the stage, not very frequently to be sure and most likely in a sadly mutilated form. The stage varied according to the theater, the stages in the court and school theaters naturally being better equipped with stage setting and scenery than those of the traveling players. We still find a front and a back stage separated

by a curtain, but the sides of the stage are now shut off from the audience either by curtains or walls. The front stage in the permanent theaters was provided with several drop curtains, one for each act; the stages of the itinerant players, on the other hand, generally had only one. Artificial light had to be used, as most of the performances were given indoors.

As we turn from the tragedies to the comedies—*Scherzspiele* is the author's designation—we involuntarily smile at the idea of an individual so immersed in gloom and melancholy even harboring a humorous thought. But as we read along we can but marvel at the wonderful metamorphosis, and finally perforce resort to a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde theory to account for the exuberant humor and the genuine tomfoolery that pervades the plays.

The expositional soliloquies are addressed directly to the audience and filled with such exclamations as: "See here! you may believe me," etc. Quite regularly the approach of the next character is announced at the end of a soliloquy: O see, there she comes already! or, See, there he is, etc. In "Die geliebte Dornrose" the overheard soliloquy is repeatedly used and in connection with it the aside. In the first act of this play two soliloquies, delivered by characters at opposite sides of the stage, are overheard by a third character who is hiding.<sup>1</sup> The asides are for the most part humorous, although a reflective bit occurs occasionally, so, e. g., "You see, neighbors, that's what you get when you allow the girls to go to school and learn to spell,"<sup>2</sup> possibly the earliest dramatic attack upon feminism.

Ranting soliloquies do not occur. A good example of the soliloquy expressing inner conflict occurs in "Horribilicribrifax": "What shall I do now? Shall I turn back? That would appear too unmannerly. I shall pass by and address her very briefly."<sup>3</sup> In "Peter Squenz," where there is a play within the play, viz., that of Pyramus and Thisbe, the characters of the enclosed play employ the introduction soliloquy in the style of the old church plays.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comedies, ed. by H. Palm; I, p. 258 ff.; II, p. 286 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 89. Another example in IV, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, III, p. 28 ff.

## 2. *Lohenstein*

Taking "Cleopatra" and "Ibrahim Sultan" as representative plays, one finds little in the use of the soliloquy that differentiates it from that employed by Gryphius. The relative scarcity of the soliloquy is perhaps noteworthy. The same fondness for philosophic reflections, florid rhetoric and apostrophe characterize Lohenstein's soliloquies. On the whole, there is less ranting than in the soliloquies of Gryphius. Quotations from the one real soliloquy in "Cleopatra"—there are three which are delivered in the presence of others—will sufficiently illustrate the above mentioned characteristics:

"O Sprudel-reiches Meer der jammer-vollen Welt!  
 Die Segel stehn gespannt, die Netze sind gestellt  
 Uns in den Hafen, Ihn in's Garn und Grab zu führen. . . .  
 Ein flatternd Herze gleicht mit Wanckel-muth den Pferden,  
 Die ein geschwancker Zaum bald recht- bald linckwärts lenckt. . . .  
 Gunst, Liebe, Freundschaft gleicht sich zarten Berg-Kristallen,  
 Die keine Kunst ergäntzt, sind einmal sie zerfallen:  
 Stillt auch Versöhnung gleich zuweilen Wund und Blut,  
 Sie bricht erhitzter auf und schärfet Gall' und Glutt,  
 Die in dem Hertzen kocht, Man trockne Sumpf und Lachen,  
 Ein linder Regen wird sie wieder wässricht machen." . . .<sup>1</sup>

## 3. *Christian Weise*

Compared to the bombast and turgidity of Gryphius and his followers the simplicity and naturalness of Weise's plays is indeed refreshing. He shows a keen knowledge of human nature and a good sense of humor. Had he not ground out his plays in such a mechanical fashion—he wrote three each year besides attending to his arduous school work—and written them for school purposes, his plays might have exerted great influence upon the development of the drama. As a matter of fact his plays hardly created a ripple in the dramatic pool.

The comedies "Die böse Catherine" and "Der bäurische Machiavellus"<sup>2</sup> and the tragedy "Masaniello"<sup>3</sup> will adequately

<sup>1</sup> Act II, p. 181; Deutsche Nat. Lit., Vol. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Deutsche Nat. Lit., Vol. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Neudrucke deutscher Litteraturwerke des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts, ed. by R. Petsch, Halle, 1907.

serve to illustrate Weise's use of the soliloquy. The large number of soliloquies is noteworthy as well as the author's fondness for asides. For the most part these soliloquies are expository and of the crude type in which the audience is taken into the speaker's confidence. As a rule they are short and the language is natural and free from ornamentation. Our old friends, the self-identifying and self-characterizing soliloquy, also crop to the surface every now and then, so, e. g., in "Machiavellus," II and III;<sup>1</sup> "Masaniello," III.<sup>2</sup> Reflective and moralizing soliloquies are rather infrequent, but it is interesting to notice that the clown is often the author's mouthpiece and indulges in a moralizing harangue in the style of the French *raisonneur*.<sup>3</sup> Emotional soliloquies are very prosaic and shallow and offer nothing remarkable.

On the whole, Weise's technic of the soliloquy shows little advance over that of the 15th and 16th centuries.

#### 4. *Gottsched and his Followers*

Gottsched's view regarding the soliloquy has been previously quoted, viz., that sane people are not in the habit of talking to themselves when alone except when they are overcome by emotion, and in that case very briefly. Although he himself did not entirely taboo the soliloquy in his dramatic work—his "Cato," e. g., contains several short reflective and link soliloquies and a long deliberative soliloquy—his pupils and followers consistently avoided it. His "Deutsche Schaubühne," a collection of translations from Molière, Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, Holberg, etc., and original works by his wife, J. E. Schlegel and others, for the most part contains dramas which do without soliloquies and asides, especially the plays of J. E. Schlegel and Luise Adelgunde Victoria Gottsched, the reformer's wife. Schlegel makes sport of the soliloquy in a criticism of a drama by J. Klaj entitled "Herodes": "Here we plainly see how useful it would be if the author of the tragedy himself would step into a corner of the stage and talk occasionally.

<sup>1</sup> *Deutsche Nat. Lit.*, Vol. 39, p. 20; p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

. . . Instead of the hero coming out and telling himself about his troubles in a long speech, so that the spectators may know what is on his mind, the author might say: now love is tormenting my hero with cruel thoughts; now he does not know what to do."<sup>1</sup>

In the comedies the use of the confidant in the French manner solves the problem of exposition; in the tragedies the dialog is overloaded with epic matter, so that it becomes entirely undramatic and lifeless, as in Schlegel's "Hermann." Characterization and psychological development are practically wanting, in fact the whole treatment is epic rather than dramatic. If these plays had had real dramatic worth their new technic, viz., the dropping of soliloquies and asides, might have exerted great influence upon succeeding dramatists. As a matter of fact the innovation passed unnoticed.

Gottsched's hostility to the soliloquy and aside is doubtless due to French influence, primarily that of Hédelin, whom he ranks with Aristotle as an authority on dramatic matters.<sup>2</sup> Inasmuch as Hédelin's view was on the whole hostile to the soliloquy, as we have previously pointed out, it is small wonder that Gottsched adopts his master's point of view. Then too the fact that Corneille's later dramas and Molière's masterpieces were practically devoid of soliloquies may also have influenced him.

Summing up, then, the period from Gryphius to Lessing, a period of servile adherence to foreign models and foreign technic, Roman in the case of Gryphius, his followers and the writers of school drama, French in the case of Gottsched and his school, illustrates the usual fate of a popular idol in the career of the soliloquy. The florid, rhetorical soliloquy of Gryphius, dazzling the populace as did Beau Brummel in the heyday of his career, meets with reverses and is compelled to slink off the scene of its former triumphs, when it is reduced to a threadbare, impossible exterior such as it presents in Weise's works.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Düsel, in *Beiträge zur Critischen Historie der deutschen Sprache*, 27. Stück, 1741.

<sup>2</sup> F. Düsel, p. 4 ff.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ERA OF LESSING, SCHILLER AND GOETHE

In the preceding period the soliloquy passed from a state of unchallenged acceptance and unqualified approval to a state of innocuous desuetude. During the classic period, the era of Lessing, Schiller and Goethe, the soliloquy practically underwent the opposite process. Lessing attempted the impossible by trying to transmute a convention into a "slice of life." His realistic treatment of the soliloquy undoubtedly invested it with as much naturalness (*vraisemblance*, to use the French term), as was humanly possible, and yet the fact remains that even his form of the soliloquy is not a faithful counterpart of real life—we do not regularly think aloud—and after all a convention. Schiller and Goethe on the other hand did not worry about the naturalness or unnaturalness of the soliloquy, but restored it to its former position of an absolute ruler whose rights are in no wise questioned.

#### 1. *Lessing*

If Lessing had not been antagonistic to all things Gottschedian, there is a possibility that he might have developed and perfected the new technic and given us powerful dramas whose appeal would not have been weakened by the absence of soliloquies and asides. But to return to actuality, Lessing's technic of the soliloquy in his early comedies, "Damon," "Der junge Gelehrte," "Der Misogyn," "Die alte Jungfer," "Der Freigeist," "Die Juden" and "Der Schatz," is on a plane so much lower than that found in his maturer plays that it is best treated separately.

Expositional soliloquies are rare in the early plays, as the employment of confidants in the French manner made them unnecessary. Only one example of the introductory expositional soliloquy occurs, viz., in "Der Misogyn," but even here

we find quite an improvement over the bald and calm statement of facts that was customary. A highly irate father bellows a few disjointed expositional bits at the audience. A belated piece of introductory exposition, "Freigeist," I, 2, shows a skillful blending of the purely epic with the emotional, the latter outweighing the former. The accumulated anger of the first scene bursts forth in wrathful reflections which are followed by a few facts necessary to the comprehension of the plot. But one crudely expositional speech can be found, that of Raps in "Der Schatz," Sc. II, in which he identifies himself: "Man muss allerlei Personen spielen können. Den möchte ich doch sehen, der in diesem Aufzuge den Trommelschläger Raps erkennen sollte? Ich seh' aus, ich weiss selber nicht wie; und soll—ich weiss selber nicht was? Eine närrische Kommission!"

Unnecessary characterizing bits, which remind one of the labels in the mouths of old pictures, crop up in soliloquies now and then, e. g., in "Der Freigeist," I, end, where the servant characterizes his master, and II, 4, where Lisette describes two servants: "Ein Paar allerliebste Schlingel! Adrastrs Johann und Theophans Martin: die wahren Bilder ihrer Herren von der hässlichen Seite! Aus Freigeisterei ist jener ein Spitzbube; und aus Frömmigkeit dieser ein Dummkopf."

The speaker's intention rarely requires a whole speech; as a rule it forms the appendix of a reflective soliloquy, thus giving a dramatic touch to speeches that temporarily retard the movement of a play.<sup>1</sup>

Lessing shows a decided predilection for reflective soliloquies in the early plays, a type of soliloquy in which the speaker reverts to the theme discussed in the preceding dialog and comments upon it or gives vent to the feeling and emotion aroused by that conversation. Unless these reflective speeches result in a change of attitude on the part of the speaker or in the formulation of a plan that has some bearing on the action, they naturally are lyric rather than dramatic. Most of them are undramatic in character and have a considerable admixture of

<sup>1</sup> Die alte Jungfer, II, 4; Der Freigeist, III, 7; Der Schatz, Sc. 2.



philosophic reflection. "The tone of these soliloquies is naturally not dramatic but rather elegiac and passive, and philosophic embellishment which the young thinker could not do without even in his comedies makes them rather duller and more tiresome than livelier and brighter."<sup>1</sup> Every one of the early plays furnishes examples of this type: "Damon," Sc. 6, 8; "Der junge Gelehrte," I, I, II, 4; "Der Misogyn," II, beg. II, 6; II, end; "Die alte Jungfer," II, 4; "Die Juden," 17, 19; "Der Schatz," 3, 8, 10, 11; "Der Freigeist," III, 3, III, 7, V, 2, etc. There is a liberal sprinkling of the philosophical element in almost all of the above mentioned soliloquies. A full-fledged "Tendenzmonolog" occurs in "Die Juden," Sc. 3, in which the attitude of Christians towards Jews is criticized. Emotional outbursts are rare, the best examples occurring in "Der Freigeist," I, 2, V, 2.

Lessing's desire to avoid an empty stage gave rise to quite a few link soliloquies whose function it was to fill the gap between the exit of one character and the entrance of another.<sup>2</sup>

The most interesting feature of Lessing's early soliloquies is their style. Even in "Damon," his earliest attempt, Lessing breaks away from the familiar type with its carefully expressed, logically developed and uninterrupted ideas, such as one might find and expect in a previously prepared argument or oration. Both of Damon's long reflective speeches, Sc. 6 and 8, show the author's attempt to express the ideas as they occur to the speaker. The thoughts come haltingly one moment, then again one thought is interrupted by another that suddenly suggests itself. There are breaks in the continuity of the thought, sudden jumps far afield, reversion to previously expressed ideas, sudden anticipations. "Ich würde ihn selbst tadeln—Doch—ich halte ihn auch nicht einmal fähig dazu—er mag sein, was er will—aber—ich irre mich wohl auch—ich beurtheile ihn nach mir—weil ich so schwach bin; folgt es denn daraus, dass ein anderer—Doch allerdings eine so vollkommene Freundschaft ist für diese Welt nicht—Ob auch wohl Leander so denkt, als er redet?—Halt—Ich will," etc.

<sup>1</sup> Düsel, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Damon, I, 3; I, 5; Die alte Jungfer, I, 3; I, 4; Der junge Gelehrte, I, 1.

In his desire to emphasize the realistic element he over-emphasized and went too far, but that does not detract from the value of the innovation. There is at least no doubt in any one's mind that the speaker is thoroughly aroused and excited. Adrast's soliloquy in "Der Freigeist," V, 2, also admirably portrays his violent agitation: "Was für ein neuer Streich!—Ich kann nicht wieder zu mir kommen!—Es ist nicht auszuhalten! Verachtungen, Beleidigungen—Beleidigungen in dem Gegenstande, der ihm der liebste sein muss:—alles ist umsonst; nichts will er fühlen," etc.

The occasional interruption of the speaker in the middle of his soliloquy is another realistic touch.<sup>1</sup> But the announcing of the next character by the speaker of the soliloquy when he has finished is far more common: "Da kömmt er ja selber; Ah, hui da kömmt; Ha, da kömmt er; kömmt da nicht."

Apostrophe is rarely used in the early plays to enliven the soliloquy. A long apostrophe to learning by Damis occurs in a pseudo-soliloquy, as a servant is present and listening.<sup>2</sup>

Asides are numerous, especially in "Die Juden," "Der Freigeist," and "Der Schatz." It seems strange that the same man who strove to make the soliloquy realistic could allow such an improbable convention as the aside in his plays. During a dialog in "Die Juden," e. g., the characters stop in the middle of a conversation and each delivers three asides, a ludicrous performance. Then after they have talked past each other, one asks the other why he has been so lost in thought.<sup>3</sup> Of course Lessing's indebtedness to French comedy and especially to Regnard, Marivaux and Destouches accounts for the use of the aside, but as early as 1750, the same year in which "Der Schatz" was written, he found asides "so ungereimt, dass nichts darüber ist,"<sup>4</sup> and accused every one who did not find them very offensive of lack of taste. It is evidently another instance of the fact that theory and practise do not always coincide.

<sup>1</sup> Die alte Jungfer, II, 4; Der Freigeist, V, 2; Die Juden, I, 3; I, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Der Junge Gelehrte, I, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Sc. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Criticism of Plautus' Captivi in Beyträge zur Historie u. Aufnahme des Theaters, 3. Stück, 1750.

In the 48th number of the "*Hamburgische Dramaturgie*" Lessing warmly defends soliloquies which acquaint us with the attitude and the plans of the speaker. Quoting from his translation of Diderot's essay on dramatic art he says: "*Warum haben gewisse Monologen eine so grosse Wirkung? Darum, weil sie mir die geheimen Anschläge einer Person vertrauen und diese Vertraulichkeit mich den Augenblick mit Furcht oder Hoffnung füllet.*" He goes on to say that if the attitude of the characters is unknown to the spectator the latter cannot manifest particular interest in the action, but that his interest will be doubled if he has some light on the matter and feels that the action and the speeches would be entirely different if the characters knew each other. Only in that case he will hardly be able to await the development when he is able to compare their real selves with their acts. Later in the same essay he defends the expository prologs of Euripides because he maintains that it is better to acquaint the audience with the necessary exposition in a crude manner than not at all. In No. 49 he again champions the expository prolog and states that he greatly prefers it to a dialog exposition with the aid of a talkative confidant.

Lessing practised what he preached with regard to the soliloquy, and we find expository soliloquies of all kinds, including the introductory variety as well as soliloquies which reveal the thoughts and emotions of the speakers. Initial exposition is conveyed in soliloquy form in "*Philotas*" and "*Emilia Galotti*," in dialog form in "*Miss Sara Sampson*," "*Minna*," and "*Nathan*." In both "*Minna*" and "*Sara*" this expository dialog takes place between the principal characters and a trusted servant or chambermaid, in other words the French confidant; in "*Nathan*" the dialog is better motivated, as Nathan returns from a journey and naturally wishes to be put in touch with the events that have occurred during his absence, reminding one somewhat of Ibsen's technic in "*Ghosts*," "*Rosmersholm*," "*Doll's House*" and others.

The brief expository bit in "*Minna*" in which Just conveys a few facts while talking in his sleep is too short to be a full-fledged initial exposition soliloquy. The clever manner

in which its exposition is presented, with its admixture of anger and the use of the dialog form, brings home rather forcibly the remarkable progress since the old-time expositional soliloquy. The initial soliloquy in "Philotas" is so permeated with despair, impatience, disgust and impotent rage that one fails to notice the purely expositional element. It is a real talking to one's self: "Schmeichle dir nur, Philotas!" and uses the apostrophe very effectively. Of the eight scenes in the first act of "Emilia Galotti," the odd scenes are adjoining links in the exposition, all in soliloquy form and all delivered by the prince. Only the first scene includes small bits of dialog with his valet. But this exposition is cleverly managed. In the first two letters in the mass of mail which he is rapidly perusing are pegs upon which he hangs a bit of information. Then the arrival of a painting previously ordered furnishes a very plausible excuse for a little more exposition. Scene 5 alone is a little superfluous in my opinion, inasmuch as the declaration of his love is repeated in the dialog of the following scene. To be sure the prince's agitation gives this soliloquy life and animation, but it is not essential. The seventh scene on the other hand bears vitally upon what is to follow with its anticipatory content. Incidentally this series of soliloquies throws considerable light upon the character of the prince.

Self-characterizing passages occur in several of the soliloquies, the crudest being that of the Klosterbruder in "Nathan," who says: "Ich mag nicht fein sein; mag nicht überreden; mag mein Näschen nicht in alles stecken; mag mein Händchen nicht in allem haben."<sup>1</sup> Marwood's speech, IV, 5, is more dramatic: "Bin ich allein?—Kann ich unbemerkt einmal Atem schöpfen und die Muskeln des Gesichtes in ihre natürliche Lage fahren lassen?—Ich muss geschwind einmal in allen Mienen die wahre Marwood sein, um den Zwang der Verstellung wieder aushalten zu können.—Wie hasse ich dich, niedrige Verstellung! Nicht weil ich die Aufrichtigkeit liebe sondern weil du die armseligste Zuflucht der ohnmächtigen Rachsucht bist."<sup>2</sup> When Tellheim tears up Marloff's note, he throws a

<sup>1</sup> Nathan der Weise, IV, beginning.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Sara Sampson.

little light on his character: "Wer steht mir dafür, dass eigner Mangel mich nicht einmal verleiten könnte, Gebrauch davon zu machen?"<sup>1</sup>

Baldly expository bits are rare indeed, the two instances in "Minna" being the only examples. But even here they are partially redeemed by being but a part of respectable reflective soliloquies. A little thought, however, would have made them unnecessary.

A good example of a descriptive soliloquy occurs in "Emilia Galotti," III, 2, where Marinelli stands at the window and describes what is going on outside. Questions and exclamations together with apostrophes give it quite a little dramatic life. Other descriptive passages are found in "Nathan," II, 5, II, 7, in the first of which Nathan describes the approaching knight, in the second a former acquaintance.

When a speaker expresses his intention in soliloquy he usually does so after due reflection, and accordingly we find an intentional ending in practically all reflective soliloquies as well as in some of the deliberative and conflict soliloquies. In this respect the reflective soliloquies of the later plays stand on a higher plane, as they rise from passive inactivity to active participation in the plot.

The reflective soliloquies of the later plays, then, both revert and anticipate, thus influencing the action. A good example occurs in "Nathan," IV, 8, where Daja, after reflecting for a moment about the preceding conversation, announces her intention of telling Recha who she really is. Other examples are found in "Minna," IV, 8; "Philotas," Sc. 4; "Emilia," III, 5, III, 2. The moralizing and philosophical element which Lessing was so partial to in his early plays is discarded in his later dramas.

The best example of a deliberative soliloquy is Nathan's famous speech, III, 6, in which he arrays his keen mental powers against the Sultan's tricky question that covers so many pitfalls and finally hits upon a solution. The slight perplexity that the Sultan's question has left him in is splendidly portrayed:

<sup>1</sup>Minna, I, 7.

"Hm! Hm!—wunderlich!—Wie ist  
 Mir denn?—Was will der Sultan? Was?—Ich bin  
 Auf Geld gefasst; und er will—Wahrheit. Wahrheit."

Then after he has laid bare the trap he proceeds to weigh possible answers in masterly fashion:

"Ich muss  
 Behutsam gehn.—und wie? wie das?—So ganz  
 Stockjude sein zu wollen, geht schon nicht.—  
 Und ganz und gar nicht Jude geht noch minder.  
 Denn, wenn kein Jude, dürft er nur fragen,  
 Warum kein Muselman?"

In the ensuing pause a solution presents itself which satisfies him completely: "Das war's. Das kann mich retten."

Scene 8 of the same act makes it plain that to Lessing the soliloquy was a thinking aloud. The stage directions read: "Tempelherr. Geht mit sich selbst kämpfend, auf und ab; bis er losbricht," which surely indicates that we are now to hear the continuation of an inner conflict, that his thoughts now become audible. His emotion quickly gives way to calmer deliberation, which results in a decision. This transition from silent to audible thought is also evident in V, 3, and III, 6.

When the head is subordinated to the heart, when the careful mental balancing of the pros and cons is upset by an emotional eruption, we pass from the deliberative soliloquy to one of conflict. Odoardo's speech, V, 4, aptly illustrates this transition: "Wie?—Nimmermehr!—Mir vorschreiben, wo sie hin soll?—Mir sie vorenthalten?—Wer will das? Wer darf das?—Der hier alles darf, was er will? Gut, gut; so soll er sehen, wie viel auch ich darf, ob ich es schon nicht dürfte! Kurzsichtiger Wüterich! Mit dir will ich es schon aufnehmen. Wer kein Gesetz achtet, ist eben so mächtig, als wer kein Gesetz hat. Das weisst du nicht? Komm an! komm an!—Aber siehe da! Schon wieder; schon wieder rennet der Zorn mit dem Verstande davon." Then he settles down to calm deliberation: "Was will ich? Erst müsst' es doch geschehen sein, worüber ich tobe," etc. Soliloquies in which emotion unmistakably holds the upper hand are Odoardo's conflict soliloquy, V, 6; Mellefont's speech, IV, 2; Marwood's soliloquy, IV, 9; the speech

Tempelherr, III, 10. Philotas's long soliloquy in the 4th scene is deliberative on the whole, although there is a strong undercurrent of emotion at times.

Purely emotional soliloquies, i. e., soliloquies whose sole aim is to acquaint us with the speaker's feelings, are not frequent. Most of the soliloquies, with the exception of the baldly expositional and the purely mental deliberative speeches, have an admixture of emotion. Minna's outburst of joy at finding Tellheim: "Ich habe ihn wieder!—Ich hab' ihn, ich hab' ihn! Ich bin glücklich! und fröhlich!"<sup>1</sup> is the best example of an unadulterated emotional soliloquy in Lessing's dramas.

The language of the soliloquies in the later plays lacks poetic embellishment and rhetorical flourish; it is simple and natural. Liberal use of apostrophe and the dialog form infuses a great deal of dramatic life into these speeches. In addition the soliloquies give us an insight into the workings of the mind, showing us how the ideas come to consciousness one by one. The fact that the ego of the speaker is so often divided into two arguing or opposing selves makes us forget for the time being that there is but one character on the stage.

The custom of announcing the approach of an actor at the close of the soliloquy is retained in the later plays. Asides are less numerous in the later dramas, but even this is surprising when we know how bitterly Lessing denounced them in the "Dramaturgie," where he refers to them as "unnatürliche Künsteleien." "Nathan" contains as many as fifteen asides!

Nowhere in Lessing's plays is the language of the soliloquy embellished or florid. Generalizing and sententious ingredients occur only in his early plays. A growing desire to make the soliloquies as natural as possible is plainly discernible as one reads the dramas chronologically. Whereas many of the early soliloquies served a merely mechanical purpose, viz., the linking of scenes, the later soliloquies are essential parts of the drama as they have a direct bearing upon plot and characterization. The scarcity of expositional soliloquies in the early plays is due to the fact that the necessary exposition was usually

<sup>1</sup> II, 7.

conveyed to the audience by dialogs of servants or confidants who were thoroughly conversant with the state of affairs. Although the later plays have more expository soliloquies, these speeches are never crudely instructive but closely knit into the fabric of the play.

## 2. *Storm and Stress Drama*

A craving for uncorrupted nature, the glorification of individuality, the denunciation of current social conditions, bitter attacks upon authority, whatever its guise—these in short are the characteristics of this revolutionary movement. The attack upon literary authority manifested itself chiefly in a revolt against French influence, French artificiality and the unnaturalness that resulted from the tyranny of the irksome three unities, together with a demand for themes that were distinctively German in character.

How did all this affect the technic of the soliloquy? Quantitatively there is little difference, with the exception of a few plays, notably Schiller's "Die Räuber," and Müller's "Genoveva," where restraint is thrown to the winds and the soliloquy is allowed to flood page after page. Qualitatively, however, the general tendency is to indulge in ranting and produce weird excrescences upon the tree of sane expression. But whatever their faults these soliloquies are for the most part highly dramatic and virile. They show many of the best traits of Lessing's technic with their use of the dialog form, of apostrophe, frequent pauses and the presentation of ideas as they occur to the speaker.

Schiller's and Goethe's storm and stress plays will be discussed in connection with their other dramas. The dramas to be considered here are Klinger's "Die Zwillinge," Leisewitz's "Julius von Tarentum," Wagner's "Die Kindermörderin," Lenz's "Der Hofmeister," and Müller's "Golo und Genoveva."<sup>1</sup>

Sauer's criticism: "Wie ein einziger Monolog braust das Stück dahin,"<sup>2</sup> is justified as Guelfo rages through "Die Zwillinge" like a Titan surrounded by pygmies. Although the solil-

<sup>1</sup> Stürmer und Dränger, 3 vols. ed. by A. Sauer, Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 311.



oquies are not as numerous as one might expect, many of Guelfo's speeches hardly bear the semblance of dialog and are in reality disguised soliloquies. So, in I, 2, Guelfo is interrupted by Grimaldi with "Lieber Guelfo, nicht so," after he has torn a goodly supply of passion to tatters, but he pays absolutely no attention to the remark. Eight of the nine soliloquies fall to the share of Guelfo and all are hot with rage and anger, with the exception of the first half of his soliloquy at the end of Act III. Exclamations, apostrophes, questions and pauses admirably portray his tempest-tossed soul. The following will illustrate the style: "Ha! verfolgt mich alles? Alle Dämonen und Gespenster der Nacht? Mein böser Geist hängt mir auf dem Nacken, er lässt mich nicht, stiert mich aus allen Winkeln an. Blas zu! Vergift mir jedes Fäserchen meines Herzens! Wühl giftig in meinem Blut! Hu! was martert den Guelfo? wen will Guelfo martern?—Die Glocke ruft dumpf, der Sturm saust über die Tiber. Eine schöne Nacht!—Ferdinando, gieb das Weib! Ferdinando gieb die Erstgeburt!"<sup>1</sup> The language throughout leaves the impression of a battlefield covered with the disjecta membra of the combatants.

Müller's "Golo und Genoveva" is top-heavy with soliloquies and asides. The soliloquies are often baldly narrative and descriptive, but together with these expository speeches we find reflective soliloquies and a choice assortment of emotional outbursts, mostly by Golo, who supplies at least one example for every emotion aroused by unrequited love. The language every now and then is lost in a maze of florid ingredients, as, e. g., "Hier will ich die süsse Luft einschlürfen, die ihre schöne Wange gekühlt, darein sie ihren balsamischen Atem ergoss; begrabt mich hier, wenn ich einst sterbe, mein Leib wird nicht in Staub zerfallen, alle meine erstarrte Adern werden bald in ein neues Leben zurückdringen und wie Blumen durch die Erde zu dieser Luft emporschiessen.—Wer doch der Schlummer sein könnte, auf solch einem Paar Wimpern zu ruhen.—Kalter Tod, warmes Leben; alles um sie—die Welt, das Universum—um einem einzigen Druck."

<sup>1</sup> III, 1.

"Schlaf wohl und süß, Liebchen zart,  
Auf deinem Mund meine Himmelfahrt!"<sup>1</sup>

The language of the soliloquies in the other plays mentioned before is natural and appropriate to the characters. In "Der Hofmeister" and "Die Kindermörderin" the few soliloquies are interesting because of the rather full stage-directions calling for pantomime, so, e. g.: "setzt sich hin und liest eine Zeit lang"; legt das Buch hin, geht sehr bewegt ein paarmal auf und ab"; "sucht in der Tasche und zieht den Brief heraus. Guckt ihn noch einmal durch."<sup>2</sup> Silence on the stage and silent expression of the emotions is an interesting forerunner of modern realistic methods. That soliloquies may have their uses is made clear by one of the characters in "Der Hofmeister" who begins to soliloquize in another's presence and, when interrupted, explains: "Es ist ein Monolog aus einem Trauerspiel, den ich gern recitiere wenn ich Sorgen habe,"<sup>3</sup> in other words, an efficacious means of driving dull care away. The soliloquy is often a real talking to one's self, as in "Julius von Tarentum," II, 7: "Dummkopf, sie sagte mir ja selbst die Ursach meiner Kälte"; V, 2, "Alter, ist das der Ton eines Richters?" In this play especially the soliloquies contain frequent pauses, numerous apostrophes and the dialog form.

### 3. Schiller

The most striking fact about the soliloquy in Schiller is its frequent occurrence in the early plays, especially "Die Räuber," and its gradual curtailment and disappearance in the latter plays. That Schiller gave this convention more than passing thought is evidenced in his preface<sup>4</sup> to the "Räuber," where he speaks with approval of the self-revealing soliloquy, the soliloquy which acquaints us with the inmost thoughts and feelings of the speaker. To be sure, he does not directly mention the soliloquy, but he does speak of "surprising the soul as it were in its most secret movements" (die Seele gleichsam bei ihren

<sup>1</sup> II, 4, end.

<sup>2</sup> IV, p. 325, *Die Kindermörderin*. V, beginning.

<sup>3</sup> II, 5.

<sup>4</sup> First sentence of the Vorrede.

geheimsten Operationen ertappen) as an advantage of the dramatic method and this undoubtedly refers to the convention of the soliloquy.

Quite in accordance with this statement we find a preponderance of reflective and emotional soliloquies and a comparative scarcity of the purely expository type. In fact, most of the expository soliloquies form a small component part of some other type of soliloquy. There is but an isolated example of an initial exposition soliloquy, and that does not occur in a play proper but in the prolog to the "Jungfrau von Orleans."<sup>1</sup> In it Joan acquaints us with the supernatural message which she has received.

Near the beginning of "Die Räuber" Franz prefaces a long reflective soliloquy with a bit of self-characterization that leaves no doubt as to his villainy, e. g., "Da müsst ich ein erbärmlicher Stümper sein, wenn ich's nicht einmal so weit gebracht hätte, einen Sohn vom Herzen des Vaters loszulösen. . . ."<sup>2</sup> Another example of this type occurs in "Maria Stuart," where Elizabeth throws considerable light upon her character: "O Sklaverei des Volksdiensts! Schmähhliche Knechtschaft—Wie bin ich's müde, diesem Götzen zu schmeicheln, den mein Innerstes verachtet! etc."<sup>3</sup> Apostrophes, exclamations, questions and answers impart considerable life to these expository fragments and raise them far above the old *ad spectatores* speeches.

Narrative soliloquies are scarce, and when they do occur they are incorporated in a reflective or emotional speech. In Wallenstein's reflective soliloquy, III, 13, we find quite a bit of narration:

"Dahingeschmolzen vor  
Der schwed'schen Stärke waren eure Heere,  
Am Lech sank Tilly, euer letzter Hort;  
Ins Bayerland, wie ein geschwollner Strom,  
Ergoss sich dieser Gustav, und zu Wien  
In seiner Hofburg zitterte der Kaiser,  
Soldaten waren teuer, etc."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Scene 4 entire.

<sup>2</sup> I, 1.

<sup>3</sup> IV, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Wallensteins Tod.

Beatrice, in her first long emotional soliloquy, also contributes expository material in the form of narration beginning:

"Und so erwuchs ich still am stillen Orte,  
In Lebensglut den Schatten beigesellt,  
Da stand er plötzlich an des Klosters Pforte,  
Schön wie ein Gott, und männlich wie ein Held."<sup>1</sup>

Wallenstein's narrative is infused with dramatic life by the use of the apostrophe, that of Beatrice by exclamation.

A splendid example of dramatic description is found in Leicester's soliloquy, V, 10,<sup>2</sup> in which the preparations for the execution and the execution itself are vividly sketched:

"... Horch! Was war das?  
Sie sind schon unten . . . Unter meinen Füßen  
Bereitet sich das fürchterliche Werk.  
Ich höre Stimmen—Fort! Hinweg! Hinweg  
Aus diesem Haus des Schreckens und des Todes!  
Wie? Fesselt mich ein Gott an diesen Boden?  
Muss ich anhören, was mir anzuschauen graut?  
Die Stimme des Dechanten—Er ermahnet sie—  
Sie unterbricht ihn—Horch!—Laut betet sie—  
Mit fester Stimme—Es wird still—Ganz still!  
Nur schluchzen hör' ich und die Weiber weinen—  
Sie wird entkleidet—Horch! Der Schemel wird  
Gerückt—Sie kniet aufs Kissen—legt das Haupt—"

Other examples worthy of mention are "Maria Stuart," IV, 10, where Elizabeth depicts the dangers that threaten her on every side; "Die Jungfrau von Orleans," IV, beginning, where Joan describes the festivities in Rheims; II, 6, of the same play, where Montgomery describes the approach of the battling maiden.

The speaker's intention usually forms the conclusion of a reflective or deliberative soliloquy and is short as a rule: "Fiesco," II, 8, II, 19, III, 2, V, 1; "Maria Stuart," IV, 10; "Jungfrau," III, 9; "Kabale und Liebe," I, 7; "Wallensteins Tod," III, 13. When Franz Moor learns of his father's death he indulges in a lengthy instructive outburst which illustrates

<sup>1</sup> Die Braut von Messina.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Stuart.

the ranting unnatural style so characteristic of "Die Räuber": "Nun sollt ihr den nackten Franz sehen und euch entsetzen! Meine Augenbrauen sollen über euch herhangen wie Gewitterwolken, mein herrischer Name schweben wie ein drohender Komet über diesen Gebirgen, meine Stirne soll euer Wetterglas sein! Er streichelte und koste den Nacken, der gegen ihn störrig zurückschlug. Streicheln und kosen ist meine Sache nicht. Ich will euch die zackichten Sporen ins Fleisch hauen, und die scharfe Geißel versuchen. . . . In meinem Gebiet soll's so weit kommen, dass Kartoffeln und dünn Bier ein Traktament für Festtage werden, und wehe dem, der mir mit vollen, feurigen Backen unter die Augen tritt! Blässe der Armut und sklavischen Furcht sind meine Leibfarbe; in diese Liverei will ich euch kleiden!"<sup>1</sup>

Thought soliloquies, especially of the reflective variety, greatly outnumber the expository type, and every play furnishes one or more examples. In "Die Räuber" Franz is especially obliging in the matter of taking the audience into his confidence and unfolding his crassly materialistic point of view, his heartless villainy, his cringing cowardice. In his first long-winded soliloquy he reveals his attitude toward life, practically a negation of all ties which hold society together. One by one he takes up and coolly disposes of reputation, conscience, etc.: "Gewissen—o ja freilich! ein tüchtiger Lumpenmann, Sperlinge von Kirschbäumen wegzuschrecken! . . . In der That sehr lobenswürdige Anstalten die Narren im Respekt und den Pöbel unter dem Pantoffel zu halten, damit die Gescheiten es desto bequemer haben."<sup>2</sup> In spite of its great length the soliloquy is not without dramatic life. Apostrophes are frequent, questions follow each other in breathless haste, sometimes five or six before an answer is vouchsafed: "Warum hat er mich gemacht? doch wohl nicht gar aus Liebe zu mir, der erst ein Ich werden sollte? Hat er mich gekannt ehe er mich machte? Oder hat er mich gedacht wie er mich machte? Oder hat er mich gewünscht, da er mich machte? Wusste er was ich werden würde? Das wollte ich ihm nicht raten."<sup>3</sup> Occa-

<sup>1</sup> Die Räuber, II, 2 end.

<sup>2</sup> I, 1.

sional interruptions in the flow of thought also show a desire to secure verisimilitude. In the same act Karl reflects upon the degeneracy of the times in a speech that is permeated with disgust and indignation and characterized by terrible ranting.<sup>1</sup> The soliloquy at the beginning of the second act, partly reflective, partly deliberative, suffers from the insertion of medical lore in the reflective portion, but is otherwise dramatic. The other reflective speeches in this play are made more or less dramatic by the use of exclamations, questions and answers, and pauses.<sup>2</sup>

The short reflective soliloquies in "Fiesco" form quite a contrast to the lengthy outpourings in "Die Räuber." Their brevity might tempt one to regard them as link soliloquies, but they serve a dramatic purpose by characterizing the speaker or by showing his attitude. Fiesco delivers most of these speeches, usually at the end of a scene: "Dieser Republikaner ist hart wie Stahl." "Wenn diese Flammen ins Vaterland schlagen, mögen die Doria feste stehen." Other instances occur in I, 2; II, 16; III, 6; V, 1.

It would lead too far afield to take up all the reflective soliloquies. Among the more noteworthy<sup>3</sup> are Eboli's dramatic speech when Don Karlos spurns her love,<sup>4</sup> Wallenstein's long soliloquy when he realizes that he has hopelessly involved himself,<sup>5</sup> Leicester's speech after his unmasking by Burleigh,<sup>6</sup> Tell's famous soliloquy in the hollow way.<sup>7</sup> The length of Tell's speech is a little surprising at first sight, but, let us remember that we are dealing with a soliloquy, not with dialog. In dialog his loquaciousness would be surprising, but here it is simply a case of his thoughts being made audible as he is waiting to kill Gessler. This reflective speech contains no element of conflict; no at-

<sup>1</sup> I, 2.

<sup>2</sup> I, end; IV, 2 by Franz; IV, 2, end by Franz; IV, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Other examples: *Kabale und Liebe*, I, 6; IV, 8; *Don Karlos*, I, 1; II, 9; III, 1; III, 5; IV, 6. *Piccolomini*, II, 5; III, 9; *Wallensteins Tod*, II, 4; II, 5; III, 13. *Jungfrau*, II, 8; III, 9; *Braut v. Messina*, beg. of Sc. 2 partly; *Tell*, II, 1 end.

<sup>4</sup> *Don Karlos*, II, 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Wallensteins Tod*, I, 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Maria Stuart*, IV, 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Wilhelm Tell*, IV, 3.

tempt is made to reach a decision, no defense of his intended action is made. His decision is previously made and he is absolutely convinced of the righteousness of his undertaking. The form is practically that of a dialog and consequently highly dramatic. Practically a third of it is an apostrophe to Gessler, and throughout the remainder of the soliloquy apostrophes are made now to his arrow and bowstring, now to his children.

Purely deliberative soliloquies are rather infrequent, inasmuch as the speaker's emotional nature usually crops to the surface and puts an end to calm deliberation and a cool unimpassioned weighing of the pros and cons. Franz Moor's solution of the problem of committing murder legally admirably illustrates the deliberative type. The problem is stated: "Wer es verstünde dem Tod diesen ungebahnten Weg in das Schloss des Lebens zu ebnen? den Körper vom Geist aus zu verderben . . . ha! ein Originalwerk! wer das zu Stand brächte?" His perplexity is removed little by little by a careful weighing of all possible solutions, till the one eminently satisfactory weapon is found: "Zorn? . . . dieser heisshungrige Wolf frisst sich zu schnell satt . . . Sorge? . . . dieser Wurm nagt mir zu langsam . . . Gram? . . . diese Natter schleicht mir zu träge—Furcht? . . . die Hoffnung lässt sie nicht umgreifen . . . Was? sind das all die Henker des Menschen? . . . Ist das Arsenal des Todes so bald erschöpft? . . . (Tiefsinnend) Wie? . . . Nun? . . . Was? Nein! Ha! (Auffahrend) Schreck!—Was kann der Schreck nicht? . . . Und doch? Wenn er auch diesem Sturm stünde? . . . Wenn er? etc."<sup>1</sup> The final decision is worked out as well as any of Lessing's. The suspense, the mental groping, the flashlike decision, remind us of Nathan's decision in his famous soliloquy. To be sure the ranting spoils the good effect. Posa's soliloquy immediately before his interview with the king is moulded along the lines of Nathan's speech prior to his interview with the Sultan and avoids Moor's ranting. Posa is perplexed at being summoned by the king. "Wie komm ich aber hierher? Eigensinn des launenhaften Zufalls war es nur, was mir mein Bild in diesen Spiegeln zeigte? . . .

<sup>1</sup> Die Räuber, II, 1.

Ein Zufall nur?" After due deliberation he reaches a decision: "Was der König mit mir auch wollen mag, gleichviel!—Ich weiss, was ich . . . ich mit dem König soll—und wär's auch eine Feuerflocke Wahrheit nur. . . ."¹ The Moor's soliloquy in *Fiesco*² differs from these in that it reaches no decision.

When the speaker's emotions intrude upon his calm deliberation, when head gives way to the heart, the way is paved for a soliloquy in which the struggle between conflicting ideas and emotions is depicted, in short, a conflict soliloquy. *Fiesco* passes through two such struggles. In the first conflict³ between his selfishness and his altruism the latter is victorious and he decides to renounce his ambition for the good of the state. The opening lines leave no doubt as to the type of soliloquy: "Welch ein Aufruhr in meiner Brust! welche heimliche Flucht der Gedanken. . . ." In his second inner struggle⁴ *Fiesco* vacillates for some time between obeying and ruling, but finally decides in favor of the hammer rather than the anvil. Here too the inner unrest is pointed out near the opening of the soliloquy: "Wilde Phantasien haben meinen Schlaf aufgeschwelgt . . . mein ganzes Wesen krampfzig um eine Empfindung gewälzt. . . ." Joan's conflict between love and duty,⁵ Karl Moor's "to be or not to be" soliloquy,⁶ Amalia's struggle after she has spoken to Karl,⁷ and the latter's conflict as he sees the scenes of his childhood after a long absence,⁸ are other examples of this type.⁹

Philosophic utterances frequently form a small component part of a reflective soliloquy, especially in the later dramas. The most noteworthy example, as well as the longest, is *Wallenstein's* reflection on custom:¹⁰

¹ Don Karlos, III, 9.

² *Fiesco*, III, 7.

³ *Die Verschwörung des Fiesco*, II, 19.

⁴ *Fiesco*, III, 2.

⁵ *Die Jungfrau*, v. O, IV, beg.

⁶ *Die Räuber*, IV, 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, IV, 1.

⁹ Two soliloquies in *Demetrius*.

¹⁰ *Wallensteins Tod*, I, 4.



"Nicht was lebendig, kraftvoll sich verkündigt,  
Ist das gefährlich Furchtbare. Das ganz  
Gemeine ist's, das ewig Gestrige,  
Was immer war und immer wiederkehret  
Und morgen gilt, weil's heute hat gegolten!  
Denn aus Gemeinem ist der Mensch gemacht,  
Und die Gewohnheit nennt er seine Amme.  
Weh dem, der an den würdig alten Hausrat  
Ihm rührt, das teure Erbstück seiner Ahnen!"

In the face of death Talbot philosophizes as follows:

"So geht der Mensch zu Ende—und die einzige  
Ausbeute, die wir aus dem Kampf des Lebens  
Wegtragen ist die Einsicht in das Nichts  
Und herzliche Verachtung alles dessen,  
Was uns erhaben schien und wünschenswert. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Other examples occur in "Don Karlos," III, 9; "Maria Stuart," II, 6; IV, 10; "Wilhelm Tell," II, 1.

Emotional soliloquies are especially numerous in "Die Räuber," and the early dramas are all characterized by the most unnatural florid style. So, e. g., when Karl Moor realizes his brother's colossal knavery, he regales us with an *allegro furioso* on the theme Spitzbube, with several variations.<sup>2</sup> Fiesco contributes this inimitable bit when he discovers his murdered wife: "Ah, (mit frechem Zähneblecken gen Himmel) hätt ich nur seinen Weltbau zwischen diesen Zähnen—ich fühlte mich aufgelegt, die ganze Natur in ein grinsendes Scheusal zu zerkratzen, bis sie aussieht wie mein Schmerz."<sup>3</sup> Such examples might be multiplied *ad libitum* but would serve no purpose. The later dramas furnish more examples of thought soliloquies with the exception of "Die Braut von Messina" in which three of the four soliloquies are of the emotional type. The diction of these soliloquies like that of the entire play is lofty and highly poetic.

Pantomime by an actor left alone on the stage as a means of expressing his emotions has largely supplanted the soliloquy in

<sup>1</sup> Jungfrau, III, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Die Räuber, IV, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Fiesco, V, 13.

the modern realistic drama. Schiller realizes the value of pantomime and frequently inserts stage-directions in his soliloquies calling for it. Yet he does not attempt to supplant the soliloquy by pantomime, but wisely makes it an effective servant. There is but one noteworthy instance where a character is left alone on the stage without delivering the expected soliloquy. The overpowering grief is here expressed by silent pantomime which is far more effective than a long outburst would be. The stage-directions read: "Wallenstein leaves. The servant lights the way. Seni follows. Gordon remains standing in the darkness, looking after the duke until he has disappeared in the furthest corridor; then he expresses his grief by gestures and leans sorrowfully against a column."<sup>1</sup> One of the most common stage-directions found in the soliloquies is that calling for silence, which shows that Schiller realized that the mind does not work with clock-like precision and that the flow of thought is frequently interrupted. "Nach einem langen Tiefschweigen; Pause; grosse Pause; in Tiefsinn versunken; bleibt tiefsinnig stehen; geht tiefdenkend auf und nieder," are the most frequently used directions and are especially numerous in the first four plays. All of the eight directions found in "Wallenstein" and the succeeding dramas call for silence.

Summing up then we find that the soliloquy after running riot in "Die Räuber," both quantitatively and stylistically, gradually subsides and shows marked moderation along both lines. Although "Fiesco" and "Kabale und Liebe" combined do not give as much space to the soliloquy as "Die Räuber," the style employed is still characterized by ranting and florid outbursts and the tendency towards sane expression is slight indeed. In "Don Karlos" on the other hand, the style of the soliloquies is natural and free from ornamentation. In the later dramas in spite of the fact that they are clothed in verse, the prevalence of natural diction and the comparative absence of rhetorical embellishments in the soliloquies is noteworthy. The most striking fact about the soliloquies however is their dramatic form. Practically only such passages as embody philosophic

<sup>1</sup> Wallensteins Tod, V, 5 end.

generalizations might be termed undramatic, all others throb with life. Schiller is especially happy in his use of the dialog form, in his habit of making the soliloquy a real speaking to one's self. When this duality of the speaker is not in evidence the skillful use of apostrophe again imparts this dialog element to the speeches. Question and answer, exclamations and apostrophe never permit the soliloquy to degenerate into a lifeless narration of facts and feelings.

#### 4. *Goethe*

Unquestioning acceptance of the soliloquy in all its forms characterizes Goethe's use of the convention. In his second dramatic effort, "*Die Mitschuldigen*," which shows a profusion of soliloquies and asides, Goethe seems to have seen the absurdity of this prodigality and pokes fun at it by saying: "*Ohne viel Raison giebt's manchen Monolog.*"<sup>1</sup> Although his second version of "*Götz*" contains fewer soliloquies than the first, it is not due to the fact that the soliloquies troubled him, but rather to the fact that *Adelheid* had been too much in the limelight and had become too prominent in the play. In order to readjust the play and lessen the emphasis placed upon this character, some of the soliloquies were discarded. On the other hand, the first part of "*Faust*" is richer in soliloquies than the original version known as the "*Urfaust*." The gradual elimination of soliloquies noticeable in Schiller is not in evidence in Goethe's dramas; quite the contrary, Goethe's later plays employ this convention more freely if anything than the early dramatic works. The most notable change in the soliloquies as we follow the plays chronologically is the gradual transition from a dramatic mold to one that is lyric and elegiac.

Initial exposition soliloquies are employed in "*Die Geschwister*," "*Iphigenie*," and "*Faust*." Of the three only that in the first mentioned is baldly expositional, and it is rather crudely epic, being relieved only by an expression of the speaker's love for *Marianne* in the form of an impassioned apostrophe and the portrayal of the doubts that arise in his mind as to her love for

<sup>1</sup> III, 8.

him. The conflicting emotions and his decision are dramatically depicted: "O Marianne! wenn du wüsstest, dass der, den du für deinen Bruder hältst, dass der mit ganz anderm Herzen, ganz andern Hoffnungen für dich arbeitet! . . . Vielleicht! . . . Ach! Es ist doch bitter . . . Sie liebt mich . . . ja, als Bruder . . . Nein, pfui! das ist wieder Unglaube, und der hat nie was Gutes gestiftet. . . . Marianne! ich werde glücklich sein, du wirst's sein, Marianne!" The initial soliloquy in "Iphigenie" on the other hand is so permeated with her grief, her unhappiness and her hopes, not to forget the philosophical admixture, that the expository matter is hidden by a veil, as it were. The exposition in Faust's soliloquy is also entirely subordinated to the emotional element. After revealing his hopeless mood, his dissatisfaction with his present condition: "Es möchte kein Hund so länger leben," the soliloquy reveals his ardent longing for life and love. Realizing his failure as a scholar, Faust casts aside that hitherto dominant interest and pleads for emotional participation in life. The grim bitterness of the introduction gives way to a passage of great lyric warmth and beauty which is followed by another outburst of disgust and the execution of the plan to call magic to his aid. The approach of the Erdgeist is very vividly described, especially where he arouses himself with almost superhuman effort: "Du musst! du musst, und kostet es mein Leben!" The speech then is rather an exposition of mental state than of facts, a highly subjective soliloquy. Epimetheus's opening soliloquy in "Pandora" might also be termed a soliloquy of mental state, as it is for the most part reflective and only incidentally expository. The bit of self-identification in this speech is interesting:

"Denn Epimetheus nannten mich die Zeugenden,  
Vergangnem nachzusinnen, Raschgeschehenes  
Zurückzuführen, mühsamen Gedankenspiels,  
Zum trüben Reich gestalten-mischender Möglichkeit."

In a few of the fragments expository soliloquies are found, e. g., in "Nausikaa," I, 2, where Ulysses briefly alludes to his wanderings; in "Die Aufgeregten" and in "Bruchstücke einer Tragödie" which was not written out but merely outlined.

The third act of the second part of "Faust" opens with an expository soliloquy by Helena in the style of a Greek tragedy.

Instances of identification are rare in the soliloquies. Aside from the example in "Pandora," in which Epimetheus introduces himself, there are two instances in the second part of "Faust," in which Erichtho and Helen introduce themselves. In the opening soliloquy of "Iphigenie" and the first soliloquy in "Nausikaa" the identity of the speaker is revealed without the actual mentioning of the name.

The best of the few examples of self-characterization is that of Brackenburg in "Egmont," in which he contrasts his boyish traits with his present characteristics.<sup>1</sup> But even this forms but a small part of a reflective soliloquy, as is the case with the other characterizing bits, e. g., "Ich habe nicht gelernt zu hinterhalten, noch jemand etwas abzulisten."<sup>2</sup>

Descriptive soliloquies are of frequent occurrence, especially in the second part of "Faust," the second act of which has as many as nine of this type. Weislingen's speech as he is dying is only partially relieved by a dramatic expression of remorse at having condemned Götz to death: "Ich bin so krank, so schwach. Alle meine Gebeine sind hohl. Ein elendes Fieber hat das Mark ausgefressen. Keine Ruh' und Rast, weder Tag noch Nacht. Im halben Schlummer giftige Träume. . . . Matt! Matt! Wie sind meine Nägel so blau!—Ein kalter, kalter, verzehrender Schweiss lähmt mir jedes Glied. Es dreht mir alles vorm Gesicht. Könnt' ich schlafen!"<sup>3</sup> Shorter descriptions, especially of occurrences off the stage, are less crude, as, e. g., Lerse's: "Götzen zu Hülff! Er ist fast umringt. Braver Selbitz, du hast schon Luft gemacht,"<sup>4</sup> or Götz at the window: "Aha! ein rotröckiger Schurke, der uns die Frage vorlegen wird, ob wir Hundsfötter sein wollen."<sup>5</sup> Or "Gott sei Dank! Dort seh ich Feuer, sind Zigeuner. Meine Wunden verbluten, die Feinde hinterher. Heiliger Gott, du endigst grässlich mit mir!"<sup>6</sup> In "Stella" the description at the window is infused

<sup>1</sup> I, end.

<sup>2</sup> Iphigenie, IV, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Götz, IV, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Götz, III, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Götz, III, 16.

<sup>6</sup> Götz, V, 6.

with some dramatic life by an emotional admixture and frequent apostrophes. "So seh ich dich wieder? Den Schau-  
platz all meiner Glückseligkeit! Wie still das ganze Haus ist!  
Kein Fenster offen! Die Galerie wie öde, auf der wir so oft  
zusammen sassen! Merk dir's Fernando, das klösterliche An-  
sehn ihrer Wohnung, wie schmeichelt es deinen Hoffnungen."<sup>1</sup>  
In "Egmont" the princess rather baldly describes the unsettled  
condition of the Netherlands,<sup>2</sup> but later in the same play Alba  
delivers a dramatic description at the window: "Er ist es!  
Egmont!—Trug dich dein Pferd so leicht herein und scheute  
vor dem Blutgeruche nicht, und vor dem Geiste mit dem blan-  
ken Schwert, der an der Pforte dich empfängt?—Steig ab!—  
So bist du mit einem Fuss im Grab! und so mit beiden!—Ja,  
streichl' es nur und klopfe für seinen mutigen Dienst zum letzten  
Male den Nacken ihm—Und mir bleibt keine Wahl."<sup>3</sup> Eugene-  
nie's description of the preparations made for her departure,<sup>4</sup>  
Faust's descriptive bits in his first two soliloquies, his rapturous  
outburst after seeing Gretchen, Gretchen's description of the  
jewels, all are enlivened by an emotional admixture. The de-  
scriptive soliloquies in the second part of "Faust" on the other  
hand are quite undramatic and unnecessarily retard the action.  
A few of these speeches are characterized by great stylistic  
beauty and their marvellous word painting makes one forget  
their dramatic shortcomings. For example:

"In Dämmerchein liegt schon die Welt erschlossen  
Der Wald ertönt von tausendstimmigem Leben,  
Tal aus, Tal ein ist Nebelstreif ergossen,  
Doch senkt sich Himmelsklarheit in die Tiefen,  
Und Zweig' und Äste, frisch erquickt, entsprossen  
Dem duft'gen Abgrund, wo versenkt sie schliefen;  
Auch Farb' an Farbe klärt sich los vom Grunde,  
Wo Blum' und Blatt von Zitterperle triefen,  
Ein Paradies wird um mich her die Runde."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stella, I, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Egmont, I, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Egmont, IV, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Die Natürliche Tochter, V, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Faust, Part II, 1, opening sol.

Faust's opening soliloquy in the fourth act is another instance of lyric beauty. Other speeches however lack the saving grace of formal beauty, as, e. g., Mephisto's soliloquy in the second act:

"Blick' ich hinauf, hierher, hinüber,  
Allunverändert ist es, unversehrt;  
Die bunten Scheiben sind, so dünkt mich, trüber,  
Die Spinneweben haben sich vermehrt;  
Die Tinte starrt, vergilbt ist das Papier;  
Doch alles ist am Platz geblieben;  
Sogar die Feder liegt noch hier,  
Mit welcher Faust dem Teufel sich verschrieben.  
Ja! tiefer in dem Rohre stockt  
Ein Tröpflein Blut, wie ich's ihm abgelockt."<sup>1</sup>

Purely narrative soliloquies are infrequent, and it is exceptional to find such an ad spectatores speech as Sickingen's: "Es geht alles nach Wunsch; sie war etwas bestürzt über meinen Antrag und sah mich vom Kopf bis auf die Füße an; ich wette sie verglich mich mit ihrem Weissfisch. Gott sei Dank, dass ich mich stellen darf. Sie antwortete wenig und durcheinander; desto besser!"<sup>2</sup> Epimetheus's second soliloquy in "Pandora," in which he relates his first meeting with Pandora at some length is entirely narrative. But generally the narrative passages are brief and form but a portion of some other type of soliloquy, as in "Iphigenie," where this narrative bit is incorporated in a reflective soliloquy:

"Jetzt gehn sie, ihren Anschlag auszuführen,  
Der See zu, wo das Schiff mit den Gefährten  
In einer Bucht versteckt aufs Zeichen lauert,  
Und haben kluges Wort mir in den Mund  
Gegeben, mich gelehrt, was ich dem König  
Antworte, wenn er sendet und das Opfer  
Mir dringender gebietet."<sup>3</sup>

Marthe's recital of her husband's desertion,<sup>4</sup> Brackenbourg's mention of his attempted suicide,<sup>5</sup> Sophie's mention of her

<sup>1</sup> Faust, Part II, II, beg.

<sup>2</sup> Götz, III, 4.

<sup>3</sup> IV, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Faust, I, p. 128, ed. by Heinemann.

<sup>5</sup> Egmont, I, end.

marriage with Söller,<sup>1</sup> Breme's narration of his plans,<sup>2</sup> are other instances of the above mentioned amalgamation of a narrative passage with a reflective or some other type of soliloquy.

Soliloquies whose prime purpose is to acquaint us with the speaker's intention are infrequent. For the most part the intention is the result of reflection or inner conflict and is made a mere appendix to a soliloquy of that type, as was the custom in Lessing and Schiller. Egle's soliloquy in "Die Laune des Verliebten" illustrates the purely intentional type:

"Schon gut! Wir wollen sehn! Schon lange wünscht' ich mir  
Gelegenheit und Glück, den Schäfer zu bekehren.  
Heut wird mein Wunsch erfüllt; wart' nur, ich will dich lehren  
Dir zeigen, wer du bist; und wenn du dann sie plagst!"<sup>3</sup>

Or Götz's: "Wir wollen ihre Geduld fürn Narren halten, und ihre Tapferkeit sollen sie mir an ihren eigenen Nägeln verkaufen."<sup>4</sup> Practically every drama has examples of soliloquies with intentional appendices, generally soliloquies of the reflective type.<sup>5</sup> In "Götz," e. g., Franz after comparing Maria and Adelheid in a reflective soliloquy ends with: "Mein Herr muss hin! Ich muss hin! Und da will ich mich wieder gescheit oder völlig rasend gaffen."<sup>6</sup> Or Mephistopheles, after reflecting about reason and science and Faust's character, announces his intention as follows:

"Den schlepp' ich durch das wilde Leben,  
Durch flache Unbedeutenheit,  
Er soll mir zappeln, starren, kleben,  
Und seiner Unersättlichkeit  
Soll Speis' und Trank vor gier'gen Lippen schweben;"<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Die Mitschuldigen, I, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Die Aufgeregten, I, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Die Laune des Verliebten, Sc. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Götz, III, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Die Laune des Verliebten, Sc. 5. Die Mitschuldigen, I, 7; II, 5. Götz, I, 2; I, 5; I, end; II, 7; IV, 4. Clavigo, IV, beginning. Die Geschwister, Fabrice's sol., p. 344, ed. Bibliographisches Inst. Egmont, III, beg. Iphigenie, I, 2; II, end. Tasso, III, 5; IV, 3. Natürliche Tochter, II, 2; V, 8. Faust, I, second sol. in scene: Nacht: Studierzimmer (2). Faust, II, V, end of scene: Mitternacht.

<sup>6</sup> Götz, I, end.

<sup>7</sup> Faust, I, Studierzimmer (2).



The remaining examples of soliloquies containing the speaker's intention are mostly conflict soliloquies in which a decision is reached and the plan of action announced.<sup>1</sup>

Practically all of the reflective soliloquies just mentioned are infused with dramatic life by the judicious employment of exclamations, apostrophes, and the dialog form. This is true even of the later poetic dramas, where the atmosphere of lyric beauty afforded more than a passing temptation to cast the speaker's reflections in a lyric rather than a dramatic mold. With the exception of a few isolated passages, so notably in "Faust,"<sup>2</sup> Goethe successfully combats this temptation and infuses the soliloquies with dramatic vigor. The opening soliloquy in the fourth act of "Tasso" is a splendid example of the dramatic reflective type:

"Bist du aus einem Traum erwacht, und hat  
Der schöne Trug auf einmal dich verlassen?  
Hat dich an einem Tag der höchsten Lust  
Ein Schlaf gebändigt, hält und ängstet nun  
Mit schweren Fesseln deine Seele? Ja,  
Du wachst und träumst. Wo sind die Stunden hin,  
Die um dein Haupt mit Blumenkränzen spielten?  
Die Tage, wo dein Geist mit freier Sehnsucht  
Des Himmels ausgespanntes Blau durchdrang?  
Und dennoch lebst du noch, und fühlst dich an,  
Du fühlst dich an, und weisst nicht, ob du lebst."

Many of the purely reflective soliloquies are short, as, e. g., Margarete's:

"Du lieber Gott! was so ein Mann  
Nicht alles, alles denken kann!  
Beschämt nur steh' ich vor ihm da  
Und sag' zu allen Sachen ja.  
Bin doch ein arm unwissend Kind,  
Begreife nicht, was er an mir find't."<sup>3</sup>

Sententious bits are not very numerous except possibly in "Die Mitschuldigen," where there is a liberal sprinkling of

<sup>1</sup> Tasso, III, 3. Grosscophta, IV, 1; IV, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Faust, I, V, 602-5; 634-639; 640-651; 672-675; 682-685.

<sup>3</sup> Faust, I, 3211-3216; others 1526-29; 2678-83; 2862-64; 3677-86.

homely practical truths: "Ein Mädchen ist wahrhaftig übel dran! etc."<sup>1</sup>

"Es braucht's nicht eben just, dass einer tapfer ist;  
Man kommt auch durch die Welt mit Schleichen und mit List."<sup>2</sup>;  
"Es ist ein närrisch Ding um ein empfindlich Blut;  
Es pocht, wenn man auch nur halbweg was Böses tut."<sup>3</sup>  
"Ja, folgt der Liebe nur! Mit freundlichen Geberden  
Lockt sie euch anfangs nach—  
Doch wenn ihr einmal den Weg verliert,  
Dann führt kein Irrlicht euch so schlimm, als sie euch führt."<sup>4</sup>  
"Wenn man was Böses tut, erschrickt man vor dem Bösen."<sup>5</sup>

Weislingen's: "So gewiss ist der allein glücklich und gross, der weder zu herrschen noch zu gehorchen braucht, um etwas zu sein,"<sup>6</sup> Lerse's: "So geht's in der Welt, weiss kein Mensch, was aus den Dingen werden kann,"<sup>7</sup> etc.;" Margarete von Parma's: "O was sind wir Grossen auf der Woge der Menschheit? Wir glauben sie zu beherrschen, und sie treibt uns auf und nieder, hin und her,"<sup>8</sup> are on a somewhat higher plane and show a maturer mind.

Philosophical passages in the soliloquies are infrequent. Faust's second soliloquy includes the following philosophical passage:

"Ach! unsre Taten selbst, so gut als unsre Leiden,  
Sie hemmen unsres Lebens Gang.  
Dem Herrlichsten, was auch der Geist empfangen,  
Drängt immer fremd und fremder Stoff sich an;  
Wenn wir zum Guten dieser Welt gelangen,  
Dann heisst das Bess're Trug und Wahn.  
Die uns das Leben gaben, herrliche Gefühle,  
Erstarren in dem irdischen Gewühle.  
Wenn Phantasie sich sonst mit kühnem Flug  
Und hoffnungsvoll zum Ewigen erweitert,  
So ist ein kleiner Raum ihr nun genug,

<sup>1</sup> I, 3, v. 181.

<sup>2</sup> II, 1, v. 337.

<sup>3</sup> II, 2, v. 377.

<sup>4</sup> II, 3, v. 398 ff.

<sup>5</sup> III, 1, v. 540.

<sup>6</sup> Götz, I, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Götz, III, 19.

<sup>8</sup> Egmont, I, 2.

Wenn Glück auf Glück im Zeitenstrudel scheitert.  
 Die Sorge nistet gleich im tiefen Herzen,  
 Dort wirkt sie geheime Schmerzen,  
 Unruhig wiegt sie sich und störet Lust und Ruh!;  
 Sie deckt sich stets mit neuen Masken zu,  
 Sie mag als Haus und Hof, als Weib und Kind erscheinen,  
 Als Feuer, Wasser, Dolch und Gift;  
 Du bebst vor allem, was nicht trifft,  
 Und was du nie verlierst, das musst du stets beweinen?"<sup>1</sup>

Another splendid example is found in Faust's opening soliloquy in the second part, v. 4704-4714.

Soliloquies of violent inner conflict are far more numerous than the calmer and purely mental deliberative soliloquy which, as a matter of fact, is very scarce indeed. Weislingen's deliberation after agreeing to remain at Bamberg incidentally depicts the working of his conscience: "Du bleibst! Sei auf deiner Hut, die Versuchung ist gross—Doch ist's nicht recht, die vielen Geschäfte, die ich dem Bischof unvollendet liegen liess, nicht wenigstens so zu ordnen, dass ein Nachfolger da anfangen kann, wo ich's gelassen habe. Das kann ich doch alles thun, unbeschadet Berlichingen und unserer Verbindung. Denn halten sollen sie mich hier nicht.—Wäre doch besser gewesen, wenn ich nicht gekommen wäre. Aber ich will fort—morgen oder übermorgen."<sup>2</sup>

In "Die Mitschuldigen," Söller, who needs money to pay his gambling debts, solves the predicament as follows:

"Ich weiss nicht aus noch ein.  
 Wie wär's? . . . Alcest hat Geld . . . und diese Dietrich' schliessen.  
 Er hat auch grosse Lust, bei mir was zu geniessen!  
 Er schleicht um meine Frau, das ist mir lang' verhasst:  
 Eh nun! da lad' ich mich einmal bei ihm zu Gast.  
 Allein, käm' es heraus, da gäb's dir schlimme Sachen—  
 Ich bin nun in der Not, was kann ich anders machen?  
 Der Spieler will sein Geld, sonst prügelt er mich aus.  
 Courage, Söller! Fort! es schläft das ganze Haus."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faust, I, 632-651.

<sup>2</sup> Götz, II, 7.

<sup>3</sup> I, 7.

Eugenie, on the point of embarking, stops to weigh the pros and cons and decides to remain:

“Und solche Sorge nähm’ ich mit hinüber?  
Entzöge mich gemeinsamer Gefahr?  
Entflöhe der Gelegenheit, mich kühn  
Der hohen Ahnen würdig zu beweisen,  
Und jeden, der mich ungerecht verletzt,  
In böser Stunde hülfreich zu beschämen?  
Nun bist du, Boden meines Vaterlands,  
Mir erst ein Heiligtum, nun fühl ich erst  
Den dringenden Beruf, mich anzuklammern.”<sup>1</sup>

“Die Mitschuldigen” contains two splendid examples<sup>2</sup> of the dramatic conflict soliloquy. Although everything points to Sophie’s guilt, Alcest is loth to believe that such a noble creature is capable of the theft and is racked by doubt. The opening line of the first soliloquy stamps it as an expression of inner dissension:

“Solch einen schweren Streit empfand dies Herz noch nie.”

In the second soliloquy he is still in the throes of conflict:

“Nun wären wir gescheit! Das ist ein tolles Wesen!  
Der Teufel mag das Ding nun auseinander lesen! . . .  
Hier ist ein Fall, wo man beim Denken nichts gewinnt;  
Man wird nur tiefer dumm, je tiefer dass man sinnt.”

Fernando’s terrific mental struggles are admirably portrayed in “Stella,” V. 2: “Lass mich! Lass mich! Sieh! da fasst’s mich wieder mit all der schrecklichen Verworrenheit!—So kalt, so grass liegt alles vor mir . . . als wär’ die Welt nichts . . . ich hätte drin nichts verschuldet . . . Und sie!—Ha! bin ich nicht elender als ihr? Was habt ihr an mich zu fordern? . . . Was ist nun des Sinnens Ende?—Hier! und hier! Von einem Ende zum andern! durchgedacht! und wieder durchgedacht! und immer quälender! immer schrecklicher! . . . Wo’s zuletzt widerstösst! Nirgends vor, nicht hinter sich! Nirgends Rat

<sup>1</sup> Natürliche Tochter, V, 8.

<sup>2</sup> III, 7; III, 9.

und Hülfe! . . . Und diese zwei? Diese drei besten weiblichen Geschöpfe der Erde elend durch mich!"

Iphigenie's two conflict soliloquies, IV, 3, and IV, 5, are characterized by a dignified repression which is quite in accord with her nature and fully as forceful as the wild outbursts of an unbalanced nature would be. In the first of the above mentioned speeches she is agitated by the emotions aroused by the base deceit which Pylades urged her to use against her benefactor. After Pylades had persuaded her to adopt his plan Arkas reminded her of the many kindnesses which the king had shown her, and unsettled her:

"Nun hat die Stimme  
Des treuen Manns mich wieder aufgeweckt,  
Dass ich auch Menschen hier verlasse, mich  
Erinnert. Doppelt wird mir der Betrug  
Verhasst. O bleibe ruhig, meine Seele!  
Beginnst du nun zu schwanken und zu zweifeln?"

In the second speech her wish to leave guiltlessly, so that she may purify her home, struggles against the desire to save her brother and his friend, a course of procedure which involves sacrilege and gross ingratitude. In "Tasso" Leonore passes through a struggle between her selfish and her altruistic Ego, the former demanding that she abduct Tasso, thus depriving the princess of his presence, the latter insisting that she is richly blessed with the good things of this world. After an uninterrupted series of nine questions uttered by her better self her selfish nature presents its arguments in defense of the abduction and is victorious.

"Ach, sie verliert—und denkst du zu gewinnen?  
Ist's denn so nötig, dass er sich entfernt?  
Machst du es nötig, um allein für dich  
Das Herz und die Talente zu besitzen,  
Die du bisher mit einer andern teilst,  
Und ungleich teilst? Ist's redlich, so zu handeln?  
Bist du nicht reich genug? Was fehlt dir noch?"<sup>1</sup>

The soliloquy is an excellent specimen of a talking to one's self, of a dialog between two well defined characters within one soul.

<sup>1</sup> Tasso, III, 3.

In discussing the emotional soliloquies only the more noteworthy examples will be mentioned, as space forbids a detailed analysis of this numerous type. Love's awakening and relentless rule are most beautifully depicted in "Faust." Faust's soliloquy beginning:

"Willkommen süßer Dämmerchein!  
Der du dies Heiligtum durchwebst.  
Ergreif' mein Herz, du süsse Liebespein!  
Die du vom Tau der Hoffnung schmachtend lebst, etc." <sup>1</sup>

poetically describes his awakening passion; Gretchen's exquisite lyric:

"Meine Ruh' ist hin,  
Mein Herz ist schwer;  
Ich finde sie nimmer  
Und nimmermehr" <sup>2</sup>

pictures Gretchen in the grip of an overwhelming passion. Subdued grief prevades Iphigenie's opening soliloquy, passionate grief Clavigo's final outburst<sup>3</sup> and Stella's impassioned utterance, V, 1. A mixture of impassioned grief and fear characterizes Gretchen's pitiful appeal in the "Zwinger" scene:

"Wer fühlet,  
Wie wühlet  
Der Schmerz mir im Gebein?  
Was mein armes Herz hier banget,  
Was es zittert, was verlanget,  
Weisst nur du, nur du allein!" <sup>4</sup>

Jealousy is of infrequent occurrence and is rather gentle than violent, so, e. g., Brackenburg's speeches, I, end, and V, 3,<sup>5</sup> and Wilhelm's outburst in "Die Geschwister." Three powerful instances of fear are Weislingen's deathbed speech,<sup>6</sup> Egmont's horror of approaching death,<sup>7</sup> and Gretchen's terror-filled wails in the cathedral.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faust, Pt. I, 2687-2728.

<sup>2</sup> Faust, I, 3374-3412.

<sup>3</sup> Clavigo, V.

<sup>4</sup> Faust, I, 3581-3620.

<sup>5</sup> Egmont.

<sup>6</sup> Götz, V, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Egmont, V, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Faust, I, Dom.

Exuberant joy is the predominating emotion in Tasso's delirious outburst, II, 2, in Stella's soliloquy, IV, 1, and in Eugenie's speech, II, 4.<sup>1</sup> Deep despair hovers over several of Tasso's soliloquies, notably IV, 1, and IV, 5, as well as Klärchen's<sup>2</sup> and Brackenburg's<sup>3</sup> hopeless laments in "Egmont."

Thoas's angry outburst, V, 2, Iphigenie's anxious speech, IV, 1, Fernando's remorseful soliloquy, III, end,<sup>4</sup> Stella's flash of hatred, V, 1,<sup>5</sup> aptly illustrate a few more of the commoner passions.

In classifying the above mentioned emotional soliloquies the predominating passion has been the deciding factor. There are comparatively few soliloquies in which but one emotion is portrayed; quite the contrary is true. The speaker usually veers from one emotion to another or from thought to emotion and vice versa. So in Faust's opening soliloquy we find hopelessness, dissatisfaction, longing, hatred, disgust, despair together with reflective passages. To be sure we do find soliloquies in the crude drama of the early periods which are purely expository or purely emotional and do not show a combination of thought and feeling. But such instances in classical drama are rare indeed. The division into thought soliloquies and emotional soliloquies, accordingly, has been made solely for the purpose of discussion. In every instance the classification has been made with reference to the predominating element. As Dr. Arnold aptly expresses it: "In the soliloquy, as in every human document, there is a natural intermingling of thought and feeling, and therefore the segregation of thought and passion is an arbitrary arrangement for convenience of discussion."<sup>6</sup>

To sum up, the gradual elimination of the soliloquy in the later dramas, as in the case of Schiller, is not a characteristic of Goethe's craftsmanship. Quite the contrary is true and we find a larger number of soliloquies in the later dramas than those of the earlier period. Another marked difference is the

<sup>1</sup> *Natürliche Tochter*.

<sup>2</sup> V, 3.

<sup>3</sup> V, 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Stella*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Arnold, *The Soliloquies of Shakespeare*, p. 162.

style of the soliloquies of the verse dramas of the two poets. As opposed to the natural diction and the comparative absence of rhetorical embellishments in the soliloquies of Schiller's verse dramas, Goethe's later soliloquies delight in rhetorical figures, stylistic beauty and philosophic reflection. This great formal beauty, however, does not exclude dramatic force and life in all instances, as the soliloquies in "Tasso" and some of those in "Faust," which have already been cited, conclusively prove. Roughly speaking, practically all the soliloquies occurring in the dramas prior to "Egmont" are dramatic and natural in diction, with the possible exception of the soliloquies in "Stella," which are somewhat florid, perfervid and hypersentimental. In "Egmont" the hero's two-page soliloquy, V, 2, is an example of the logically developed and stylistically polished soliloquy that casts vraisemblance ruthlessly aside and aims only at producing a beautiful literary passage. Egmont's premonition and fear of death is the underlying thought, but we are not convinced that a man who can give expression to such figurative and highly embellished language is greatly worried. The other soliloquies of the play are not open to this criticism. Of the dramas following "Egmont," "Tasso" has the most dramatic and least embellished soliloquies, "Iphigenie" and "Die natürliche Tochter" more highly ornate specimens, and at the same time less dramatic, and "Faust," especially the second soliloquy of the First Part and most of the soliloquies of the Second Part, the most beautiful and embellished but at the same time least dramatic soliloquies. The successful employment of the dialog form (*sich mit sich selbst besprechen*), of apostrophes and a judicious infusion of passion into the soliloquies, raises very many of them to the level of dialog. Those of the soliloquies which are undramatic, notably the descriptive soliloquies, are doubtless dramatic slips, but they have the saving grace of being beautiful errors.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE ROMANTIC DRAMA

#### 1. *Heinrich von Kleist*

Inasmuch as Tieck, Arnim and Brentano produced only closet dramas there is nothing to be gained by subjecting this dramatic output to an examination. Let us turn then to the real dramatists of the period, beginning with Kleist.

Kleist's latest biographer, H. Meyer-Benfey, in discussing his dramatic technic as applied to the soliloquy, writes: "Kleist differs from all earlier forms of the drama by the remarkably sparing use of the soliloquy. Neither Shakespeare nor Schiller has been his model in this respect. He has consistently scorned the convenient and superficial expedient of French drama, viz., conversations with a confidant. It is greatly to his credit that he got along practically without soliloquies in spite of this fact. It is one of the most noteworthy advances which dramatic art owes to Kleist, an advance which for the time being exerted no influence and which the mature Ibsen therefore had to acquire anew."<sup>1</sup>

This must be taken with a grain of salt. The statement concerning the scarcity of soliloquies certainly does not apply to "Käthchen von Heilbronn" which not only discloses a goodly supply of soliloquies, more than Schiller's "Tell," e. g., but also a painful crudeness in the technic of the same. That Kleist got along without a confidant is true, to be sure, but does this place him on a higher plane than his predecessors? Lessing made use of this expedient only in his early unimportant dramatic efforts, which were under French influence, discarding it in his later works. Schiller did not employ it and Goethe only in "Götz," in which Adelheid's maid may be regarded as a confidant. Kleist deserves credit for his avoidance of the confidant, but it is not necessary to make so much ado about it. To what fact

<sup>1</sup> *Das Drama Heinrich von Kleists*, Vol. 1, p. 96 ff.

is the scarcity of soliloquies to be attributed? To the fact that the characters are people of action rather than people given to thought and reflection. In such characters thought soliloquies are naturally out of place. Would Kleist have written "Tasso" without soliloquies?

In "Der zerbrochene Krug" no soliloquies occur, although there are as many as sixteen asides. The lack of soliloquies is a necessary outgrowth of the action, all of which takes place in a courtroom in which two or more characters are always present, so that the number of people on the stage makes a soliloquy impossible. In "Penthesilea," that undramatic portrayal of passion run riot, there are also no soliloquies, although a few short speeches of Penthesilea might be regarded as such, inasmuch as she pays absolutely no attention to those about her. This is especially true when she is at the height of her frenzy, so e. g. in scenes 19 and 20. Accordingly only four plays, viz., "Die Familie Schroffenstein," "Käthchen von Heilbronn," "Die Hermannsschlacht," "Prinz von Homburg," and the fragment "Robert Guiskard" need be considered.

At the beginning of the second act of "Die Familie Schroffenstein" Agnes delivers a rather puzzling speech. At first sight it seems to be a soliloquy which the speaker delivers for the benefit of Ottokar, who has entered, and has been observed by the speaker. Inasmuch as the stage directions tell us that Ottokar has his back turned when she espies him and that she continues as though she had not noticed his approach, the object of the speech seems to be to create the impression in Ottokar's mind that he is overhearing a bona fide soliloquy. This of course would be an arrant absurdity, as thought can not very well be overheard. As a matter of fact two passages in this speech: "Da ist, zum Beispiel, heimlich jetzt ein Jüngling," and "Ja, dieser Jüngling, wollt' ich sagen, ist heimlich nun herangeschlichen," show that she intends the speech to be a declaration of love, roguishly delivered to Ottokar, who knows that she is aware of his presence because of these allusions to him. R. Franz, who condemns this speech as a most inexcusable type of soliloquy, evidently overlooked these lines.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Franz, *Der Monolog und Ibsen*, p. 54.

Meyer-Benfy states that Kleist scorns the soliloquy throughout this drama and thereby proves himself an independent artist and born dramatist.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, however, he admits that there are two short soliloquies<sup>2</sup> in the work and proceeds to laud them to the skies because they are such splendid link soliloquies! It has been pointed out in the discussion of Lessing that link soliloquies are an expedient of an immature dramatist. Secondly Meyer-Benfy overlooks a third and rather long soliloquy delivered by Ottokar when he is shut up in the paternal dungeon,<sup>3</sup> and a fourth soliloquy which Barnabe delivers while she is chanting her incantations over the witches' kettle.<sup>4</sup> Ottokar's soliloquy, IV, 3, deserves special mention. He has interrupted Barnabe in her incantations and suddenly makes a discovery (a child's finger in the broth) which greatly arouses him. He is so overcome with emotion that he finds it absolutely essential to his happiness to unburden himself of a soliloquy, but unfortunately he can not do it legitimately with Barnabe on the stage. How does he meet the dilemma? He politely requests her to leave, repeats his invitation twice, and, when she ignores his three invitations, pushes her out of the room and proceeds to deliver himself of his soliloquy, now that the conditions are suitable. This surely is a remarkable advance in the technic of the soliloquy! It remained for Kleist to show that a fitting place for a soliloquy may be created ad libitum by the enforced exit of one's partner.

In "Käthchen" we find two soliloquies that display all the naïve crudity of the old shrovetide plays, soliloquies that almost lead one to the belief that Kleist had no well-defined ideas on the subject of the soliloquy and that the good features are merely accidental. In the first, IV, 2, Count von Strahl takes the audience into his confidence and narrates a conversation just held with his servant, then adds a few reflections and ends with a reversion to his interview with the servant: "Gottschalk, der mir dies Futteral gebracht, hat mir gesagt, das Käthchen

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> P. 97.

<sup>3</sup> IV, 5.

<sup>4</sup> IV, 3.

wäre wieder da. Kunigunde zog eben, weil ihre Burg niedergebrannt ist, in die Thore der meinigen ein; da kommt er und spricht: unter dem Hollunderstrauch läge sie wieder da und schliefe; und bat mich, mit thränenden Augen, ich möchte ihm doch erlauben, sie in den Stall zu nehmen. Ich sagte, bis der alte Vater, der Theobald, sich aufgefunden, würd' ich ihr in der Herberge ein Unterkommen verschaffen; und indessen hab' ich mich herabgeschlichen, um einen Entwurf mit ihr auszuführen. . . ." Later: "Doch rasch, ehe Gottschalk kommt und mich stört. Dreierlei hat er mir gesagt: einmal, dass sie einen Schlaf hat wie ein Murmeltier; etc." In the second soliloquy, V, 2, the emperor very naïvely supplies us with expository matter: "Das Mädchen ist, wie ich höre, fünfzehn Jahr alt; und vor sechzehn Jahren weniger drei Monaten, genau gezählt, feierte ich, der Pfalzgräfin, meiner Schwester, zu Ehren, das grosse Turnier in Heilbronn! Es mochte ohngefähr elf Uhr abends sein, und der Jupiter ging eben mit seinem funkelnden Licht im Osten auf, als ich, vom Tanz sehr ermüdet, aus dem Schlosstor trat, um mich in dem Garten, der daran stösst, unerkannt, unter dem Volk, das ihn erfüllte, zu erlaben; etc."

In a long soliloquy at the beginning of the second act Count von Strahl expresses his sorrow at his inability to marry the plebeian Kätchen, as that would not be "standesgemäss," his great love for her and his decision to bear up heroically, in language that is florid, unnatural and unconvincing: "Ich will meine Muttersprache durchblättern und das ganze reiche Kapitel, das diese Ueberschrift führt: Empfindung, dergestalt plündern, dass kein Reimschmied mehr auf eine neue Art soll sagen können: ich bin betrübt. Alles, was die Wehmut Rührendes hat, will ich aufbieten, Lust und in den Tod gehende Betrübniß sollen sich abwechseln und meine Stimme, wie einen schönen Tänzer, durch alle Beugungen hindurchführen, die Seele bezaubern; und wenn die Bäume nicht in der That bewegt werden und ihren milden Tau, als ob es geregnet hätte, herabträufeln lassen, so sind sie von Holz und alles, was uns die Dichter von ihnen sagen, ein blosses, liebliches Märchen. . . . Kätchen, Kätchen, Kätchen! etc."

The four soliloquies<sup>1</sup> in "Die Hermannsschlacht" are brief and partially enlivened by the use of apostrophe. Two of the four soliloquies<sup>2</sup> in "Prinz von Homburg" are apostrophes, one to Fame, the other to Immortality, and both are cast in florid style. The other two are reflective, that of the prince being tinged with philosophic reflection:

"Das Leben nennt der Derwisch eine Reise,  
Und eine kurze. Freilich! Von zwei Spannen  
Diesseits der Erde nach zwei Spannen darunter, etc."<sup>3</sup>

Only one of the reflective soliloquies results in a decision, the others having no direct bearing upon the action.<sup>4</sup> The opening speech in the fragment "Robert Guiskard," a chorus by the people, is nothing but a disguised expository soliloquy, inasmuch as the committee to whom the speech is delivered is thoroughly conversant with all the facts therein set forth.

Not one of Kleist's soliloquies is a real talking to one's self, and the dialog form which is so successfully employed by the classic triad is nowhere in evidence. An occasional use of the apostrophe is all that gives life to the soliloquies. Kleist's sole claim to distinction therefore is his sparing use of the same in three of the four plays. This is counteracted however by the undramatic form of the same and the startling crudity of the soliloquies in "Kätchen" mentioned above.

## 2. Franz Grillparzer

Unquestioning acceptance of the convention as exemplified in the masterpieces of the classic period characterizes Grillparzer's use of the soliloquy. Goethe's influence is visible in the soliloquies of "Sappho," "Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen," and "Der Traum ein Leben." In "Sappho" the lyric warmth and the formal beauty of "Iphigenie" and "Tasso" are particularly noticeable. Schiller's influence is frequently in evidence, but most clearly so in "Blanka von Kastilien," the whole style and atmosphere of which is Schilleresque. Rather full

<sup>1</sup> IV, 8; V, 7; V, 17; V, 21.

<sup>2</sup> I, end; IV, 3; V, 2; V, 10.

<sup>3</sup> IV, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Homburg, V, 2.

stage directions throughout the soliloquies bespeak his obligation to Schiller, as well as the fact that most of the dramas beginning with "Das goldene Vliess" curtail the powers of the soliloquy, a practice which characterized the later dramas of Schiller.

Initial exposition soliloquies are a favorite device of our poet. Many of the fragments employ this method of attack, so, e. g., "Rosamunde Clifford," "Robert, Herzog von der Normandie," "Drahomira," "Psyche" and "Rosamunde." His two early playlets "Die Schreibfeder," and "Wer ist schuldig?" both have initial soliloquies, that of the former, however, being very crudely narrative. All the other above-mentioned speeches have the expositional material concealed by the emotional admixture. The same holds true of the dramas which employ this device. In "Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen" the exuberant happiness of Hero cloaks the expositional matter; in "Blanka" Fedriko's disgust; in "Die Ahnfrau" the count's resignation and gloom; in "Der Traum ein Leben" Mirza's anxiety and unhappiness; in "Libussa" Primislaus's joy. Apostrophes, exclamations, questions and the pervading emotion are cleverly employed in these speeches.

Fedriko's exposition speech<sup>1</sup> throws considerable light upon his character and incidentally reveals his identity in the first line: "Ha Fedriko, dies deine Bestimmung?" Both of these types are infrequent. Erny's:

"Sie glauben, weil ich selten sprech' und wenig,  
Ich könne mich nicht wehren, nicht verteid'gen,  
Mein Vater sprach wohl oft: Sie hat's im Nacken!  
Ich hab es auch! Ihr sollt noch wahrlich sehn!"<sup>2</sup>

is a good example of self-characterization, Hero's opening soliloquy another instance of identification.<sup>3</sup>

Narrative passages in the soliloquies are rather infrequent. Jaromir's recital of his murder,<sup>4</sup> Zanga's account of the battle,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Blanka von Kastilien, I, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn, II.

<sup>3</sup> Des Meeres u. der Liebe Wellen, I, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Die Ahnfrau, V.

<sup>5</sup> Der Traum ein Leben, III, beg.

Gregor's repetition of his conversation with the king,<sup>1</sup> Leon's narrative of incidents on the return trip,<sup>2</sup> Isaak's account of how he escaped the soldiers,<sup>3</sup> are the most noteworthy. Of these the last mentioned is crudely instructive:

"Ich habe mich versteckt,  
Als sie nach Räuberart das Schoss durchsuchten.  
Am Boden lag ich, in mich selbst gekrümmt,  
Und diese Decke war mir Dach und Schirm."

Hero's and Jaromir's speeches are the only ones that have an emotional admixture and thus escape being purely instructive.

Descriptive soliloquies and passages are much in evidence. Among these there are some passages of wonderful beauty that deserve quotation, especially two by Hero and another by Mirza:

"Wie ruhig ist die Nacht! Der Hellespont  
Lässt, Kindern gleich, die frommen Wellen spielen.  
Sie flüstern kaum, so still sind sie vergnügt.  
Kein Laut, kein Schimmer rings; nur meine Lampe  
Wirft bleiche Lichter durch die dunkle Luft."<sup>4</sup>

"Wie schön du brennst, O Lampe, meine Freundin!  
Noch ist's nicht Nacht, und doch geht alles Licht,  
Das ringsumher die laute Welt erleuchtet,  
Von dir aus, dir, du Sonne meiner Nacht."<sup>5</sup>

"Abend ist's, die Schöpfung feiert,  
Und die Vögel aus den Zweigen,  
Wie beschwingte Silberglöckchen,  
Läuten ein den Feierabend,  
Schon bereit, ihr süß Gebot,  
Ruhend, selber zu erfüllen.  
Alles folgt ihrem Rufe,  
Alle Augen fallen zu;  
Zu den Hürden zieht die Herde,  
Und die Blume senkt in Ruh  
Schlummerschwer das Haupt zur Erde.

<sup>1</sup> Weh dem, der lügt, I, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Weh dem, der lügt, V, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Die Jüdin v. Toledo, V, beginning.

<sup>4</sup> Des Meeres u. der Liebe Wellen, III.

<sup>5</sup> Des Meeres u. der Liebe Wellen, IV, 3.

Ferne her, vom düstern Osten,  
Steigt empor die stille Nacht,  
Ausgelöscht des Tages Kerzen,  
Breitet sie den dunkeln Vorhang  
Um die Häupter ihrer Lieben  
Und summt säuselnd sie in Schlaf."<sup>1</sup>

Zawisch's description of the queen, followed by a brief survey of the state of affairs,<sup>2</sup> is decidedly more dramatic, as is Phryxus's description of the unruly barbarians,<sup>3</sup> and Jason's picture of the vault he has entered.<sup>4</sup> Jaromir's description of the interior of the chapel which is not visible to the spectator is interesting.<sup>5</sup> Accounts of what is going on off the stage also occur in some of the soliloquies. In "Die Ahnfrau," II, beginning, Jaromir repeats a prayer which Bertha is delivering in an adjoining room; in "Ottokar," II, 1, Zawisch describes the approach of the queen; in "Der Traum ein Leben," II, 1, Zanga tells how Rustan is escorting the princess; in "Weh dem, der lügt," III, 2, Leon describes the adjoining bedroom and its snoring occupant, and later, III, 3, informs us that Atalus is digging below the bridge on which he stands.

Purely intentional soliloquies are short and few in number. Usually they form the appendix to a defective soliloquy, as was the case in classic drama. Naukleros's: "Noch geb' ich ihn nicht auf. Die Freunde samm'l' ich, wir haken ihn, und wär' es mit Gewalt,"<sup>6</sup> illustrates the purely intentional speech. Sappho's soliloquy at the beginning of the fourth act is a good example of a reflective soliloquy with an intentional ending. After lengthy reflections about ingratitude and her plans with regard to Phaon she decides to send Melitta away, inasmuch as the latter had estranged Phaon from her:

"Nach Chios soll Melitta hin, ... So sei es! Ha, so sei's!"

<sup>1</sup> Der Traum ein Leben, I, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ottokar's Glück u. Ende, III, beg.

<sup>3</sup> Der Gastfreund.

<sup>4</sup> Die Argonauten, I, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Die Ahnfrau, V.

<sup>6</sup> Des Meeres u. der Liebe Wellen, IV, 2. Other examples; Libussa, I, 1. Die Argonauten, I, 1, end; Der Traum ein Leben, IV, 4, Rustan's speech.



In "Die Jüdin von Toledo" the king interrupts his own reflections with the words:

"Allein was soll das Grübeln und Betrachten,  
Gut machen heisst's; damit denn fang' ich an."<sup>1</sup>

Jaromir's: "Ha, er geht, er geht! . . . Was soll ich? Sei es denn! . . . Nun Fassung, Fassung!"<sup>2</sup> is a noteworthy example of conciseness, as the two lines contain, first, exposition, secondly a conflict, thirdly a decision, fourthly an exhortation to himself to gain composure.

Hero's long soliloquy in the third act is a splendid example of a dramatic reflective speech, dramatic in structure as it abounds in apostrophes, exclamations and questions addressed to herself, dramatic in content as it throws considerable light upon her character. The fact that it is a thought soliloquy is emphasized by the words: "Gedanken, bunt und wirr, durchkreuzen meinen Sinn." Bertha's sad reflective soliloquy, "Ahnfrau," III, 1, illustrates the lyric type:

"Liebe, das sind deine Freuden,  
Das, Besitz, ist deine Lust?  
Wie sind dann der Trennung Leiden,  
Und wie martert der Verlust?"

Medea's review of her past life, "Medea," IV, Milo's remarks about Jason's changed character, "Argonauten," IV, 2. Leon's reflections on the manner in which he has carried out the injunction not to prevaricate, "Weh dem, der lügt," V, are some of the more striking examples of this type.

Sententious and philosophic ingredients are met with in many of the soliloquies, both in the early works and the later dramas. The unhappy lot of woman is the theme of a serio-comic outburst in "Wer ist schuldig?" the gist of which is embodied in:

"Genug! In Wien, wie in dem Lande der Chinesen,  
Ist eine Frau das unglücksel'gste aller Wesen!"<sup>3</sup>

as well as of Sappho's sad reflections beginning:

<sup>1</sup> IV, 4.

<sup>2</sup> I, near end. Other examples with intentional end: Des Meeres u. der Liebe Wellen, IV, 1, priest's soliloquy; Die Argonauten, I, 1, Medea.

<sup>3</sup> I, beginning.

"Nach Frauenglut misst Männerliebe nicht,  
Wer Liebe kennt und Leben, Mann und Frau."<sup>1</sup>

Phaon's dictum on the realization of wishes,<sup>2</sup> Medea's on the folly of man,<sup>3</sup> Primislaus's on the relative position of man and woman,<sup>4</sup> the king's on honor and reputation,<sup>5</sup> bishop Gregor's sermon on truth,<sup>6</sup> are some of the more striking illustrations.

Deliberative soliloquies of the type made famous by Nathan and Posa do not occur in Grillparzer's dramas. The nearest approach is the short speech of the escaping Queen in "Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn":

"Stell' ich den Meutern mich  
Als Königin entgegen und als Frau?  
Sie spotten mein und tun ihr blut'ges Werk.  
Ergreif' ich dieses Schwert, den Mantel hier  
Und kämpf' als Mann um meine süsse Beute?  
Zu schwach! . . . O Gott! Kein einzelner genügt!  
Drum dort hinein!"<sup>7</sup>

But even here we have an admixture of fear which removes the speech from the plane of calm thought. The same holds true for Ferdinand's soliloquy in "Ein Bruderzwist," in which the line: "Mir ringen Zweifel selber in der Brust" points to an inner struggle.<sup>8</sup>

Conflict soliloquies on the other hand are well represented. Fedriko's, Maria's and the king's conflict speeches in "Blanka,"<sup>9</sup> especially the first and last, are cast in highly dramatic mold. Jaromir's soliloquy at the beginning of the fifth act of "Die Ahnfrau" depicts him in terrible inner conflict caused by the knowledge that he has murdered his father. The hopeless attempt to appease his accusing conscience is powerfully presented.

<sup>1</sup> Sappho, III, beginning.

<sup>2</sup> Sappho, II, beginning.

<sup>3</sup> Argonauten, I, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Libussa, III, beginning.

<sup>5</sup> Jüdin v. Toledo, II.

<sup>6</sup> Weh dem, der lügt, I.

<sup>7</sup> IV, 3.

<sup>8</sup> V.

<sup>9</sup> IV, 3; V, 5; V, 7.

The mention of a few representative emotional soliloquies will suffice. Bertha's rapturous expression of joy,<sup>1</sup> Sappho's beautiful lyric portraying her grief,<sup>2</sup> Melitta's speech of grief and longing,<sup>3</sup> Ottokar's outburst of remorse,<sup>4</sup> Hero's two expressions of her love for Leander,<sup>5</sup> Matthias's hopeless resignation,<sup>6</sup> are some of the more striking examples found in the plays.

The language of the soliloquies in "Blanka" is extravagantly florid and rhetorical, in "Die Ahnfrau" it becomes lurid and feverish:

"Und die Angst mit Vampirrüssel  
Saugt das Blut aus meinen Adern  
Aus dem Kopfe das Gehirn."

In Sappho formal beauty characterizes the style. In the remaining plays the tendency towards beautiful expression predominates, although unadorned style is occasionally met with. Occasional examples of repression at times of great emotional stress are interesting forerunners of modern technic. Their scarcity, however, seems to show that they are accidental rather than the result of careful planning. In "Ottokar," IV, 1, the hero, after hearing the insulting remarks of Zawisch and the queen, remains silent and after he has stared at the ground for some time in silence says laconically: "Ist das mein Schatten? —Nun, zwei Könige. . . ." When Bancban sees his murdered wife Erny, he contents himself with a laconic: "O, Erny! O, mein Kind, mein gutes, frommes Kind!"<sup>8</sup> But this is due not so much to the overwhelming grief that befalls him as to the lack of good red blood in his veins. On the whole, then, one is justified in saying that Grillparzer does not reach

<sup>1</sup> Die Ahnfrau, I.

<sup>2</sup> Sappho, I, end.

<sup>3</sup> Sappho, II, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ottokars Glück, V, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Des Meeres u. der Liebe Wellen, III, IV, 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg, V, end.

<sup>7</sup> II, beginning.

<sup>8</sup> Ein treuer Diener, III, end.

the level set by Schiller and Goethe in the technic of the soliloquy, firstly because of the numerous narrative and descriptive soliloquies, secondly because of the infrequency of the dialog element and thirdly because more thought is bestowed upon the garb of the soliloquies than upon their appropriate content.

## CHAPTER V

### FORERUNNERS OF MODERN REALISTIC DRAMA

#### 1. *Friedrich Hebbel*

"Hebbel is rightly considered the originator (Stammvater) of the new drama. The endeavor to mirror life in its entirety in drama, to pursue man's inner life to its most secret impulses, proceeds from him. In his technic he remained a follower of the classic writers in the fullest sense of the word."<sup>1</sup> This last statement applies especially to Hebbel's use of the soliloquy. The striking feature of his plays is the frequency of soliloquies and the still greater prevalence of asides. And the cause? Hebbel's proneness to morbid introspection and self-analysis, which is faithfully reflected in his dramas. For him the drama is an opportunity to analyze the characters, to reveal every fiber of the soul, to dissect every emotion and thought. We find practically all the characters suffering from this morbid surveillance of their inner self. The result is that the dramas make a mental rather than an emotional appeal. "The frequency and explicitness of the soliloquies is due to the introspection and especially the self-criticism of the characters. With characters who are so constantly occupied with themselves and pursue their emotions and actions with skeptical scrutiny, it is natural to give expression to their inner life in soliloquy form. Seldom is a soliloquy in drama so justified by the character of the people as in the tragedies of Hebbel. The monological outpourings necessarily belong to the character portrayal of such reflecting, problematic natures."<sup>2</sup> "The greater part of their torments would remain unknown if we did not know how their thoughts acquit and accuse each other in every moment when they are alone."<sup>3</sup> One can not help but feel that this

<sup>1</sup> R. Weszleny, *Hebbels Genoveva*, Berlin, 1910, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> C. Pfeffer, *Die Psychologie der Charaktere in Hebbels Tragödie*, pp. 112, 113.

<sup>3</sup> Hanstein, *Ibsen als Idealist*, p. 52.

morbid introspection is carried too far, that we are listening to the author and not to the character in the play, and that the action suffers from a needlessly exaggerated characterization. But even though we should yield a point and accept these revelations of thought and feeling, we must protest against the numerous epic ingredients in the soliloquies. There are altogether too many bits of self-characterization, too many anecdotes and personal experiences embodied in these speeches.

Hebbel's theory with regard to the use of the soliloquy is set forth in three entries in his diary. In 1838, two years before the completion of "Judith," he made the following entry: "Wenn der Dichter Charaktere dadurch zu zeichnen sucht, dass er sie selbst sprechen lässt, so muss er sich hüten, sie über ihr eigenes Inneres sprechen zu lassen. Alle ihre Äusserungen müssen sich auf etwas Äusseres beziehen: nur dann spricht sich ihr Inneres farbig und kräftig aus, denn es gestaltet sich nur in den Reflexen der Welt und des Lebens." This splendid theory was unfortunately ignored all too often in the frenzy of composition. In 1843 we find this entry: "Monologe im Drama sind nur dann statthaft, wenn im Individuum der Dualismus hervortritt, so dass die zwei Personen, die sonst immer zugleich auf der Bühne sein sollen, in einer Brust ihr Wesen zu treiben scheinen." If Hebbel had only borne this injunction in mind we should have been spared many undramatic soliloquies. We do find examples of this type in his works, but infrequently. His last entry on this topic is made in 1861: "Monologe; laute Atemzüge der Seele." This is diametrically opposed to his earlier definition and indicates a dramatic retrogression. Of course, no objection can be raised to this dictum as a definition, since soliloquies are thoughts and emotions made audible, but it seems to be, in a measure, a justification of self-revealing soliloquies whether cast in dramatic or undramatic mold. Inasmuch as this utterance was made after the completion of all his plays, Hebbel may have had in mind the many lyric soliloquies of the Golo type.

In "Judith" the reflections of Holofernes strike a specially discordant note. He indulges in them both when alone and in the presence of his retinue, at the same time realizing their

incongruity, for he turns to his followers with the words: "Ihr wundert euch über mich, dass ich aus meinem Kopf eine Spindel mache und dem Traum- und Hirnknäuel darin Faden nach Faden abzwirne wie ein Bündel Flachs. Freilich, der Gedanke ist der Dieb am Leben."<sup>1</sup> His long self-characterizing speech in the first act, as well as his reflective and descriptive soliloquy in the fifth act, are also artistic blemishes. Nor must we overlook Mirza's loquaciousness, which regales us with anecdotes in the most approved Saxonian manner.<sup>2</sup>

"Genoveva" is fairly swamped with soliloquies and unnaturally long asides, more than a dozen of each variety being delivered by Golo. Of these Berger says: "Er (Hebbel) hat Golo nur halb als objektive Gestalt gebildet, denn dieser Charakter war auch ein Gefäß, in das er die subjektive Leidenschaft ergoss, die er sich vom Leibe schaffen wollte. Daher die lyrischen Monologe, die zuweilen sogar als breite Aparte den bewegt hinstürmenden Dialog unterbrechen."<sup>3</sup> Weszleny<sup>4</sup> also condemns these soliloquies: "Die haarspalterische Seelenquälerei in die Hebbel mit Golo hineingeraten ist, liess ihn auch häufig, häufiger als in jedem andern seiner Werke, der Versuchung, sein Wesentlichstes allein oder beiseite auszusprechen, erliegen. Das Schlimme an den Monologen ist, dass sie durchweg Selbstpsychologie enthalten. Es ist nicht die Selbstberatung, nicht das Überströmen unzählbaren Gefühls wie bei Hamlet, sondern die ängstliche Selbstbeschauung eines seelischen Wollüstlings, das besonders in den Szenen mit Genoveva störend eingreift."

Initial exposition soliloquies are scarce. The unimportant playlet "Michel Angelo,"—which is directed against the narrow-mindedness of critics who approve only of the products of artists such as already occupy a niche in the Hall of Fame and consistently condemn products of contemporary artists,—opens with a long soliloquy which is for the most part reflective, showing us Michel's attitude towards art and critics. The exposi-

<sup>1</sup> Judith, IV.

<sup>2</sup> Judith, III, beg.; IV.

<sup>3</sup> A. V. Berger, *Meine Hamburgische Dramaturgie*.

<sup>4</sup> R. Weszleny, *Hebbels Genoveva*, p. 143.

tional material contained in it is highly attenuated, the long anecdote which he relates with great relish having absolutely no bearing on the play. The opening soliloquy in "Agnes Bernauer" does little but inform us of the apprentice's jealousy. A belated expositional soliloquy is found in the second scene of "Ein Trauerspiel in Sizilien," which is also marred by an interwoven anecdote of no consequence.

Holofernes's self-characterizing speech has already been alluded to. In "Genoveva" Siegfried indulges in a beautifully worded bit of character drawing:

"Ich glaub' ein Mann zu sein, was es auch gilt,  
Nur wenn's zum Scheiden geht, bin ich es nicht,  
Da geiz' ich nach dem tiefsten Schmerz, wie nie  
Nach Lust, da bohr' ich mich in Leid und Qual  
Hinein, wie Bienen in den Blütenkelch,  
Und dann erst, wenn ich, zwischen meinem Weh  
Und dem des andern stehend, wählen kann,  
In welchen Abgrund ich versinken will,  
Besinne ich mich wieder auf mich selbst,  
Und reisse mich, als wär's vom Leben los."<sup>1</sup>

But beauty of form does not justify such an undramatic method of presentation. Count Bertram's violent denunciation of himself at least has the redeeming feature of being dramatically expressed: "So ist's, Jammermensch, so ist's! Bilde dir nicht ein, dass du dich zu tief herabsetzen kannst! Du bist solch ein Aber der Menschheit, das sie knirschend hinzufügt, wenn sie ihre Cäsaren und Napoleone aufgezählt hat. . . . Was bleibt dir? Nichts als die Hoffnung, dass es vielleicht noch irgendwo ein Loch in der Welt gibt, wo ein Kerl wie du, der nur noch ein Ding ist, hingestopft werden kann wie ein Fetzen in einen Fensterriss."<sup>2</sup> Benjamin's portrayal of his good qualities is also enlivened by the use of the dialog form.<sup>3</sup> Instances of one person characterizing another in soliloquy are fairly numerous.

Purely narrative passages are altogether too frequent and crude. Hebbel is especially fond of weaving anecdotes and

<sup>1</sup> Genoveva, I, 1, end.

<sup>2</sup> Julia, I, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Der Diamant, I, 4.



personal experiences that have absolutely no dramatic justification into the soliloquies. A quotation of one of the numerous examples<sup>1</sup> will serve our purpose. In "Maria Magdalena," I, 3, Klara, after narrating what she sees from the window and indulging in a few reflections, suddenly inserts the following: "Einmal sah ich ein ganz kleines katholisches Mädchen, das seine Kirschen zum Altar trug. Wie gefiel mir das! Es waren die ersten im Jahr, die das Kind bekam, ich sah, wie es brannte, sie zu essen! Dennoch bekämpfte es seine unschuldige Neugierde, es warf sie, um nur der Versuchung ein Ende zu machen, rasch hin, der Messpfaff, der eben den Kelch erhob, schaute finster drein, und das Kind eilte erschreckt von dannen, aber die Maria über dem Altar lächelte so mild, als wünschte sie aus ihrem Rahmen hervorzutreten, um dem Kind nachzueilen und es zu küssen! Ich tat's für sie!"

Golo's account of how he climbed to the top of the tower,<sup>2</sup> Genoveva's account of her son's behavior,<sup>3</sup> Benjamin's narrative of the trouble the stolen gem is causing him,<sup>4</sup> Preising's two instructive speeches in the fourth act of "Agnes Bernauer,"<sup>5</sup> Agnes's report of the conversation that is being carried on off the stage,<sup>6</sup> are some of the numerous narrative soliloquies found in the plays.

There is a goodly number of descriptive soliloquies, though they are not as frequent as those of the narrative type. Holofernes's unsavory description, "Judith," V, Golo's description of Genoveva as she lies in his arms unconscious,<sup>7</sup> his account of her confession in the chapel,<sup>8</sup> Maria's description at the window,<sup>9</sup> Leonhard's characterization of Mary's father,<sup>10</sup> Jacob's

<sup>1</sup> Judith, III; V. both by Mirza. Michel Angelo, beginning. Der Diamant, I, 4. Maria Magdalena, III, 7. Der Rubin, II, 4. Trauerspiel in Sizilien, I, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Genoveva, II, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Nachspiel zur Genoveva, beg.

<sup>4</sup> Der Diamant, II, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Agnes Bernauer, IV, 1, IV, 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 9.

<sup>7</sup> Genoveva, I, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Genoveva, III, end.

<sup>9</sup> Maria Magdalena, I, 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 4.

description of his wife and the jewel,<sup>1</sup> are some examples of this type. Most of these are enlivened by the use of exclamations, apostrophes and an admixture of emotion.

Intentional soliloquies occur, as well as intentional appendices to reflective and conflict soliloquies. The former type is epic and undramatic, as the following will show :

Golo. "Kein Vaterunser will ich sprechen mehr,  
Kein Ave, wie ich sonst doch gerne sprach,  
Wenn morgens eine erste Lerche stieg,  
Wenn abends eine ferne Glocke klang.  
Von jetzt an soll mir zum Legendenbuch  
Das Leben Siegfrieds dienen, meines Herrn,  
Gedenken will ich all der Tugenden,  
Der Tapferkeit, des hohen Edelmutts, etc."<sup>2</sup>

Herod's two conflict soliloquies, I, 4, and III, both ending with a decision, are highly dramatic. Judith's morbidly introspective soliloquy, III, culminates in her decision to kill Holofernes; a reflective and descriptive soliloquy of the latter concludes with a statement informing us of his intentions.<sup>3</sup>

Reflective soliloquies of the retrospective type outnumber the philosophic variety. Occasionally the two types, neither one of which is dramatic, are blended into one speech. "Geneveva" and "Julia" are well supplied with reflective speeches of all three varieties.<sup>4</sup> The following speech by Alberto illustrates the intermingling of the two types: "Hätt' ich's vorher gewusst, ich hätte mich widersetzt! Nun ist's zu spät! Aber der hat seine Tochter nie geliebt! Nur das Bild, das er sich von ihr machte! Freilich wer liebt anders! Es ist nun einmal das Schicksal des Menschen, dass man ihn wegen Eigenschaften verehrt und anbetet, verabscheut und hasst, die er gar nicht

<sup>1</sup> Der Diamant, I, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Geneveva, II, 3. Other examples: Judith, III, 2. Diamant, I, 5; V, 4. Gyges, II, end.

<sup>3</sup> Judith, V. Other examples: Geneveva, III, 12; Maria Magdalena, III, 1; III, 7. Herodes u. Mariamne, I, 2; IV, 7; Gyges u. sein Ring, III, by Rhodope.

<sup>4</sup> Geneveva, II, 4; III, 6; III, 16; V, 7. Julia, I, 4; II, 1; III, 3. Others: Judith, I; Herodes, I, 2; IV, 6. Agnes B., I, 12; III, 5. Siegfrieds Tod: II, 4; III, 5; IV, 13; Kriemhilds Rache: I, 3; I, 7; II, 6. (All of these soliloquies in the Nibelungen trilogy are short and retrospective.)

besitzt, die ihm von anderen nur geliehen werden!"<sup>1</sup> Golo's soliloquy after he has murdered Drago illustrates the philosophic type:

"Ein Mord! Was ist ein Mord? Was ist ein Mensch?  
Ein Nichts! So ist denn auch ein Mord ein Nichts!  
Und wenn ein Mord ein Nichts ist, dien' er mir  
Als Sporn für das, was wen'ger als ein Mord,  
Und also wen'ger als ein Nichts noch ist!"<sup>2</sup>

It is noteworthy that the six soliloquies in "Siegfrieds Tod," four of them reflective, are only thirty-three verses long and that the total length of the six soliloquies in "Kriemhilds Rache" is likewise only thirty-three verses (four of these are reflective).

The philosophical element usually forms but a small component part of a reflective soliloquy, and a long outburst such as Golo's on remorse, V, 7, is scarce.

Although deliberative soliloquies are very rare, Alexandra's speech, II, 2,<sup>3</sup> furnishes a good example, conflict soliloquies are rather numerous. Golo's inner conflicts are sometimes laid bare in unpardonably long and unnatural asides,<sup>4</sup> again in soliloquy form.<sup>5</sup> The asides, however, splendidly illustrate Hebel's idea of a justifiable soliloquy, viz., that two characters should appear to be speaking. Maria's two conflict soliloquies II, 6, and III, 8,<sup>6</sup> as well as Herod's two previously mentioned speeches,<sup>7</sup> are splendid examples of dramatic craftsmanship. One quotation may be pardoned:

"Warum tu' ich's denn nicht? Werd' ich's nimmer tun?  
Werd' ich's von Tag zu Tag aufschieben, wie jetzt von Minute zu Minute, bis—Gewiss! Darum fort! . . . Fort! Und doch bleib ich stehen! Ist's mir nicht, als ob's in meinem Schoss bittend Hände aufhöbe, als ob Augen . . . Was soll das? Bist du zu schwach dazu? So frag' dich, ob du stark genug bist,

<sup>1</sup> Julia, I, 4.

<sup>2</sup> III, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Herodes und Mariamne.

<sup>4</sup> II, 4; III, 4; III, 10.

<sup>5</sup> II, 5; III, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Maria Magdalene.

<sup>7</sup> Herodes und Mariamne, I, 4; III, end.

deinen Vater mit aufgeschnittener Kehle . . . Nein! Nein!  
 . . . Vater unser, der du bist im Himmel . . . Geheiligt werde  
 dein Reich . . . Gott, Gott, mein armer Kopf . . . ich kann  
 nicht einmal beten . . ."<sup>1</sup>

A few of the more striking emotional soliloquies aside from those occurring in "Genoveva," which illustrate practically every phase of love and jealousy, are Rhodope's beautiful outcry of grief in "Gyges," III, 1, IV, 1, Klara's pathetic outcry of remorse, II, 2, her despairing soliloquy, II, 6, and Judith's morbid introspective speech, III, in which she tabulates all the emotions that have swept over her since the beginning of the siege.

Hebbel makes it plain that some of his soliloquies are to be regarded as thought soliloquies, while others must be taken as speech soliloquies. So Leonhard interrupts a conflict soliloquy with: "Da kommt jemand! Gott sei Dank, nichts ist schmälicher, als sich mit seinen eigenen Gedanken abzanken müssen! Eine Rebellion im Kopf, wo man Wurm nach Wurm gebiert und einer den anderen frisst oder in den Schwanz beißt, ist die Schlimmste von allen!"<sup>2</sup> Alexandra, while delivering a soliloquy, stamps it as a speech soliloquy when she says:

" . . . Das nicht! Sprich wie du denkst,  
 Der Pharisäer lauscht nicht vor der Tür!"<sup>3</sup>

On the whole, then, the faults of Hebbel's soliloquies outweigh their virtues, the many crudities striking a discordant note. His technic of the soliloquy is on a considerably lower level than that of the immortal triad.

## 2. *Otto Ludwig*

Ludwig's name is usually associated with that of Hebbel as a forerunner of modern realistic drama. From the mass of his plans, sketches and fragments, a veritable mountain of ruins, but two dramas stand out as really great productions: "Der Erbförster" and "Die Makkabäer." The continual conflict between objectivity, which he admired so greatly in Shake-

<sup>1</sup> Maria M., III, 8. Other examples: Diamant: I, 4; IV, 2; V, 4. Julia, II, 12. Agnes B., I, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Magdalena, III, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Herodes u. Mariamne, II, 2.

speare and sought to press into service, and his natural subjectivity resulted in indecision and unproductivity.

Several of his utterances in his dramatic studies point to Ibsen's technic, especially when he says: "Die günstigste Handlung ist ein einfacher Stoff, in dem eine nicht zu grosse Anzahl durch Gemütsart, Intentionen usw. scharf kontrastierter Personen vom Anfang bis zum Ende auf einen möglichst engen Raum zusammengedrängt sind."<sup>1</sup> Another interesting dictum defines a good drama as really nothing but a catastrophe and its careful motivation through characters and situations.<sup>2</sup>

His theory regarding the soliloquy is set forth in his studies at frequent intervals. Without exception these expressions show him to be a warm friend and admirer of this convention when it acquaints us with the secret thoughts and emotions of the speaker. In a chapter entitled "Der Monolog" he writes: "Wie sehr man über das Wesen des Dramatischen im Irrtum ist, kann die jetzt geltende Regel zeigen: so wenig als möglich Monologe! Es kann keinen grössern Missverstand geben als diesen: denn in Wahrheit lähmt ein Monolog so wenig, dass eben die Monologe das eigentlich Dramatische sind. Nur freilich Monologe im rechten Sinne."<sup>3</sup> He considers a soliloquy proper only when its object is to represent the ethical and psychological content of an event. But when a little later on he states that Shakespeare's and Lessing's dramas are only a series of soliloquies with intervening motives one can but smile at this *reductio ad absurdum*.

Ludwig boldly asserts that mere pantomime can not reveal the speaker's thoughts and emotions. Shakespeare's characters think aloud as it were, according to him. He goes on to say that in reality only a part of one's thoughts and emotions are expressed, but that Shakespeare brings all this to utterance. "Blosse Gebärden des Schauspielers tun es nicht (die inneren Zustände zu versinnlichen und dem Zuhörer mitzuteilen), und der Phantasie des Zuschauers kann man nicht zumuten, die Pausen zu ergänzen."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dramatische Studien, in chapter: Dramatische Stoffe.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Entwicklung der Situation.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Der Monolog.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92, ed. by A. Eloesser.

How thoroughly he realizes that the soliloquy is a convention is made clear when he says: "Wo die Natur im höchsten Grade des Affekts stumm ist oder nur einen Hauch, eine Interjektion hervorbringt, da übersetzt Shakespeare den Hauch, den Seufzer, das Stöhnen in einen plastischen längern Ausruf, der die Gefühle zusammenfasst in einen prägnanten Satz."<sup>1</sup> And again: "Die Entwicklung eines interessanten Charakters ist nur in Monologen möglich."<sup>2</sup>

Before considering Ludwig's technic of the soliloquy in his masterpieces a glance at his earliest dramatic venture, "Hans Frei," a comedy dealing with medieval Nürnberg conditions, is of interest. His technic of the soliloquy in this play is exceedingly crude, the comedy fairly teeming with soliloquies and asides in the most approved Sachsian manner. Compared with this play Ludwig's masterpieces show decided progress both in the character of the soliloquy as well as in the remarkably temperate use of same.

In "Die Makkabäer" the second, third and fifth acts are entirely devoid of soliloquies though not of asides. Lea's two soliloquies in the fourth act are powerful and dramatic depictions of the emotions that surge through her breast. The first of Judah's two soliloquies, I, end, is reflective and permeated with disgust; the second IV, 1, is descriptive, emotional and intentional and withal dramatic in form, a real talking to himself:

"Wie Sicherheit hier mit bequemem Flügel,  
Dies Lager brütet. Kein Verhau! Kein Graben!  
Ist Judah tot? Ist er ein Tor geworden,  
Dass man ihn höhnen darf? Geduld, bis dir  
Die ausgefallnen Schwingen wieder wachsen;  
Dann zahl' die neue Schuld ihm mit der alten.  
Nun nach Jerusalem!"<sup>3</sup>

The empty stage at the beginning of the fifth act of "Der Erbförster," followed by considerable pantomime, is an interesting forerunner of present day realistic methods. The short

<sup>1</sup> Dramatische Studien, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> IV, 1.

soliloquy which follows is a dramatic translation of her anxious thoughts into words. The eight soliloquies are all short and dramatic. Exclamations, questions, often a real talking to one's self, characterize these soliloquies. The expository element is very infrequent,<sup>1</sup> most of the speeches being reflective or emotional. The announcing of the approaching actor is a favorite device, as it was with Lessing. Stein's soliloquy, II, beginning, illustrates many of the above mentioned characteristics:

"Verwünschter alter Eigensinn! Der ganze schöne Tag verdorben. Jetzt sässen wir bei Tisch. Recht mag er schon haben, dass das Durchforsten nicht taugt. Aber muss er mich desshalb so in Rage bringen? Freilich ich müsste klüger sein als er. Meine Hitze war auch mit schuld.—Mich dauert nur die Försterin —und die Kinder. Ich will auch—(Steht auf, setzt sich wieder). Was denn? Eine Torheit mit der andern gut machen? So unüberlegt im Nachgeben sein, wie ich's im Uebelnehmen war? Alter Sprudelkopf! Aber das soll mir eine Lehre sein.—(Kleine Pause, dann steht er wieder auf, nimmt Hut und Stock und wirft beides wieder hin.) Nein, es geht nicht; es geht durchaus nicht. Was? Das war eine Blamage, nie wieder gut zu machen. Diesmal muss er kommen; ich kann ihm nicht helfen. Aber er hat vielleicht schon . . . ist das nicht Möller?"

Summing up then, Ludwig's soliloquies are short, dramatic and legitimately used, i. e., to convey thoughts and emotions which would otherwise remain unexpressed. His fidelity to the convention stamps him as a conservative adherent to classical tradition not as an innovator. Credit is due him however for the avoidance of the crude makeshift of the expository soliloquy.

### 3. *Ludwig Anzengruber*

"Through his healthy realism Anzengruber paved the way in a striking manner for the naturalistic movement that followed, although he has nothing in common with its perversities."<sup>2</sup> According to R. M. Meyer, Anzengruber was recognized as the foremost dramatist in Germany at the time of his death. "With his dramas realism entered upon the stage. His serious

<sup>1</sup> IV, 7, *Der Erbförster*.

<sup>2</sup> Max. Koch, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, p. 483.

realistic drama is entitled to a position alongside of the serious classical drama, his 'volkstümliche' comedy deserves a place beside the classical comedy of Grillparzer and Kleist."<sup>1</sup>

Examining four representative plays, viz., "Der Pfarrer von Kirchfeld," "Der Meineidbauer," "Die Kreuzelschreiber" and "Das vierte Gebot," we find that Anzengruber's technic of the soliloquy is essentially that of the classical period and in no manner foreshadows the technic employed by the naturalists who followed him. Although he avoids purely expository speeches, we do find epic admixtures occasionally, and, what is worse, disproportionately long speeches in the dialog which convey expository material, as, e. g., in "Der Meineidbauer." The gradual presentation of expository material in the last mentioned play reminds one of Ibsen's technic, but Anzengruber's method is crude and transparent as compared with that of the Scandinavian.

<sup>1</sup> Die deutsche Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts, R. M. Meyer, p. 659.



## CHAPTER VI

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

#### 1. *Hauptmann*

The technic of the modern German realistic drama, notably that of its chief exponent, Gerhart Hauptmann, is indebted to such an extent to Ibsen's technic, that a brief discussion of Ibsen's technic and its influence upon German drama will not be amiss. This influence is set forth in a very illuminating manner by A. von Berger: "Of the different elements which are amalgamated in Ibsen's mental physiognomy and impart to it the modern expression, the scientific point of view and manner of presentation and everything connected with it have exerted the most stimulating and fruitful influence upon German drama. Ibsen, accordingly, was the source of the entire flood of realistic psychological milieu dramas which has poured over Germany since the middle of the eighties and has not subsided yet. Perhaps Ibsen's significance and service for German poetry is best expressed by saying that he created a form of art, a style and a technic which has proven itself capable of appropriating life as it unfolds itself when seen by modern observers and analyzed by modern psychologists. The essence of this technic consists in the exclusion of all theatrical conventions from the dramatic form which do not correspond to reality. Its aim is the impression as though we were witnesses of scenes from life and conversations which are given as though they were not being listened to. The characters of the old drama do not entirely ignore the spectator; they say many things for the sake of the spectator which real people who are thoroughly engrossed in their affairs could not possibly say. The characters in Ibsen's plays do not seem to suspect that they are figures in a drama performed for an audience. Everything that smacks of the theater is to be rejected. Above all, then, the monolog, but also many other things that resemble the mono-

log: asides, conversations in which the characters tell each other things they already know, merely so that the audience will be informed, characterization which in the last analysis is nothing more than the assurance by some one that he has this or that characteristic. The German realists since the eighties have adopted Ibsen's technic and adapted it to their needs.

Striking fidelity to reality, absolute spontaneity, exact motivation even to the most minute detail, these three things define the essence of the dramatic form that has its origin in Ibsen. This form made possible the formation of the realistic milieu drama, whose chief exponent is Hauptmann."<sup>1</sup>

Ibsen shows a decided preference for the analytical drama, in which the action is practically ended before the curtain rises and the greater part of the play devoted to the unfolding of the expository material—Archer refers to it as the retrospective method—but he also uses the synthetic form in which the action is developed and takes place in the drama, and a combination of the two methods. "Ghosts," "Rosmersholm," "The Wild Duck," and "John Gabriel Borkmann" are types of the analytical drama; "The Comedy of Love," "The Pretenders," "Brand," "Peer Gynt," "Emperor and Galilean" and "The League of Youth" are types of the synthetic drama, and "A Doll's House," "Hedda Gabler," "Little Eyolf" and "The Lady from the Sea" show a mixture of the two types. Ibsen's analytical drama in which the conditions of the soul, "états d'âmes," rather than outward conditions, "états des choses," are represented, exerted a powerful influence upon Hauptmann.

Ibsen's technic in his early historical and fantastic plays in verse was on a friendly footing with the soliloquy. When he turned to the prose tragedy of every-day life, however, a change of technic is noticeable. Beginning with "The Pillars of Society," the soliloquy is almost entirely dropped. To be sure a few short soliloquies occur in the last mentioned play and in "A Doll's House," but these cases are exceptional. Here and there we find short outbursts by persons left alone on

<sup>1</sup> A. v. Berger, "Über Drama u. Theater," p. 27 ff., Leipzig, 1900.

the stage, as, e. g., when Hedda burns up the manuscript, end of act III; Hilde, end of act II of "The Master Builder"; Mrs. Borkmann at the beginning of "John Gabriel Borkmann"; Werle at the end of Act I, and Hjalmar in Act V of "The Wild Duck." To all intents and purposes, then, the later plays, the plays whose technic influenced the dramatists of other countries, are devoid of soliloquies.

Ibsen, however, was not the only dramatist who influenced Hauptmann's technic. The influence exerted by the joint production of Holz and Schlaf, "Die Familie Selicke," upon Hauptmann was profound. Especially "Vor Sonnenaufgang," which incidentally is dedicated to Holz and Schlaf, is greatly indebted to the above mentioned tour de force. "Die Familie Selicke" unrolls a page from the seamy side of life just as it might be enacted before an invisible spectator. The naturalistic portrayal of conditions as set forth in this play eschews soliloquies, asides and all remarks ordinarily made for the benefit of the spectator. Both the minute and painstaking depiction of conditions as well as the avoidance of the convention of the soliloquy have undoubtedly left their impression upon Hauptmann's work. A gripping psychological drama, "Meister Oelze," written by Schlaf after the dissolution of the literary partnership, deserves mention. The treatment is naturalistic throughout and but two short outbursts under the stress of the greatest emotion occur.

In discussing Hauptmann's technic of the soliloquy, I shall confine myself to the realistic dramas. With the exception of short emotional outbursts by characters who are left alone on the stage, similar to those found in Ibsen's later dramas, nothing remotely resembling a soliloquy occurs. Bearing in mind that the soliloquy is a convention, we can hardly refer to these brief utterances as soliloquies, inasmuch as it is quite common in every-day life to give vent to short ejaculations when overcome with some emotion. "It happens rather frequently that an excited person soliloquizes. But cases in which this is in accordance with reality are not soliloquies in the technical sense, and even the naturalists raise no objection to them. Only such speeches can be regarded as soliloquies which are delivered on

the stage with the assumption that that which we hear is only thought and not really spoken."<sup>1</sup>

What takes the place of the soliloquy in Hauptmann? Are the substitutes which he offers for expository soliloquies, soliloquies of thought and emotion and conflict, satisfactory? In conveying the exposition Hauptmann follows in the footsteps of Ibsen, who shows remarkable skill in that particular. Setting aside the crude expository soliloquy, many playwrights resort to the convenient French confidant. Not so Ibsen. Nor does he resort to the naïve expedient of having persons on the stage converse about things which are absolutely familiar to themselves merely to acquaint the audience with them. The return of a friend or acquaintance who has not kept up the correspondence and naturally has to be informed of what has occurred during the interim is a favorite device of Ibsen. Lona Hessel and John Tønnesen return after a long absence in "The Pillars of Society," Mrs. Linde in "The Doll's House," Pastor Manders and Oswald in "Ghosts"; Kroll meets Rebekka after a long interval in "Rosmersholm;" in "The Lady of the Sea" Arnholm and the Stranger return; in "Hedda Gabler" Tesman and Hedda return from a trip, while Thea and Eilert appear after years of absence, etc. This device is also employed by Hauptmann in several of his plays. In "Vor Sonnenaufgang" Alfred Loth visits Hoffmann after an interim of ten years; in "Das Friedensfest" Dr. Scholz as well as his son Wilhelm returns after a long absence; in "Einsame Menschen" Anna Mahr enters a household and disrupts it.

What of the speaker's secret thoughts and aspirations, the torturing doubts and racking conflicts that beset his soul? How are they made known to the audience now that the soliloquy is out of the question? By means of pantomime and facial expression! Elaborate stage directions, sometimes a page in length, are inserted by the author ostensibly for the actor's guidance in the interpretation of inner thoughts, emotions and conflicts by means of facial expression and pantomime. But if as a matter of fact some of the demands made upon facial

<sup>1</sup> Hans Sittenberger, *Die Wahrheit auf der Bühne*, p. 31, Vienna, 1893.

expression are impossible of execution, as I shall shortly demonstrate, then the stage directions, in part at least, are intended for the reader and are epic, not dramatic. Although pardonable in a closet-drama, this method of procedure is entirely out of place in a drama intended for the stage. And even where the stage directions are capable of execution, the spectator sees things more or less through a veil and has to indulge in conjecture as to what the author is really driving at. I venture to suggest that the actual thoughts, the conflicting emotions themselves are of more interest to the spectator than the mere knowledge that the actor is thinking or passing through an inner conflict.

Some of Hauptmann's stage-directions cannot possibly be executed, while others must certainly tax the ingenuity of the actors to the utmost. In "Vor Sonnenaufgang," e. g., Frau Krause on one occasion is asked to be "blaurot vor Wut," on another "puterrot." In "Das Friedensfest" he makes a demand which only an actor with the characteristics of a chameleon can suitably interpret: "Seine Farbe wechselt oft." Here-upon the much abused face is to show plainly how conflicting emotions rack his soul and how his previously made resolution begins to weaken: "Hierauf ist deutlich wahrzunehmen wie Strömungen für und wieder in ihm kämpfen,—wie er in seinem Entschluss wankend wird." Not indistinctly mark you, but plainly! Then, when his father appears, he is asked to portray a violent inner struggle by means of pantomime: "Wilhelm scheint einen Seelenkampf physisch durchzuringen." At the end of the first act of "Einsame Menschen," the stage directions tell us that: "In Käthe ist etwas vorgegangen!" What? And how is this mysterious something to be presented to the audience?

Again the stage-directions are filled with characterizing and descriptive bits which suggest the spurned characterizing soliloquy. The action itself ought to bring out these characteristics. The author is making use of the prerogatives of the novel, he employs the epic method, inasmuch as these statements are intended for the reader, not the spectator in the theater. The directions at the beginning of "Die Weber" are the best ex-

ample of this undramatic method of procedure: "Die meisten der harrenden Webersleute gleichen Menschen, die vor die Schranken des Gerichts gestellt sind, wo sie in peiniger Gespanntheit eine Entscheidung über Tod und Leben zu erwarten haben. Hinwiederum haftet allen etwas Gedrücktes, dem Almosenempfänger Eigentümliches an, der, von Demütigung zu Demütigung schreitend, im Bewusstsein, nur geduldet zu sein, sich so klein als möglich zu machen gewohnt ist. Dazu kommt ein starrer Zug resultatlosen, bohrenden Grübelns in allen Mienen. Die Männer, einander ähnelnd, halb zwerghaft, halb schulmeisterlich, sind in der Mehrzahl flachbrüstige, hüstelnde, ärmliche Menschen mit schmutzigglasser Gesichtsfarbe: Geschöpfe des Webstuhls, deren Kniee infolge vielen Sitzens gekrümmt sind. Ihre Weiber zeigen weniger Typisches auf den ersten Blick; sie sind aufgelöst, gehetzt, abgetrieben, während die Männer eine gewisse klägliche Gravität noch zur Schau tragen und zerlumpt, wo die Männer geflickt sind." In "Vor Sonnenaufgang" we are informed that Mrs. Krause's deportment and clothing betray pride, stupid arrogance and absurd vanity, also that her face is hard, sensual and wicked; that Hoffman's expression is "verschwommen"; that Kahl would like to play both the gentleman as well as the man of wealth, that his features are coarse and his expression mostly "dummpfiffig."

The most striking example of epic treatment is shown in a direction at the beginning of the second act of the same play which reads: "hierauf die feierliche Morgenstille;" Even a past master of stage effects might well be perplexed at this demand. It would also tax his ingenuity to present a sultry day towards the end of May, called for in the introduction to "Die Weber."

## 2. *Sudermann*

In contrast to Hauptmann, who devoted the greatest attention to the portrayal of existing conditions, the milieu, Sudermann's chief aim is a stirring exciting action. Opposed to the negative, passive heroes of the former, Sudermann presents us with positive, active protagonists. In contrast to the messenger from the outside world who attempts to relieve conditions

in Hauptmann's dramas, Sudermann has the hero himself return from distant parts to stir up a conflict between two contending points of view, as in "Die Ehre," "Die Heimat," "Glück im Winkel" and others.

What as to his technic of the soliloquy? In "Die Ehre," his first dramatic venture, we find three short soliloquies<sup>1</sup> and numberless asides; six in the first act, eleven in the second, twelve in the third and six in the fourth, a total of thirty-five. The soliloquies are of the reflective type with an intentional ending, thus having some dramatic justification as they affect the action. The chief blemish of the play are the long didactic speeches of Trast, the mouthpiece of the author, in the style of the French *raisonneur*.

In "Sodom's Ende" soliloquies are fairly numerous. The author aims this satirical thrust at the soliloquy, when he has Adah say, I, 10, "Ich überlasse Sie dem Monolog, Herr Professor, den Sie sogleich über unsere Verderbtheit halten werden." Whereupon the professor does deliver a soliloquy, although he avoids the type suggested. The soliloquies are for the most part reflective,<sup>2</sup> with one very dramatic conflict soliloquy by Willy between his baser and his better self, ending in a victory for the latter.<sup>3</sup>

In "Die Heimat," his most effective stage play, the soliloquy does not occur at all and but three asides are found. The same holds true of "Johannes," in which but one aside occurs. "Teja" and "Fritzchen" eschew both soliloquies and asides.

When we turn to the idealistic drama, however, we meet with the customary technic of the soliloquy. In Hauptmann's "Die versunkene Glocke," Sudermann's "Die drei Reiherrfedern," Fulda's "Der Talisman," all symbolic dramas, the convention is employed as it was in the dramas of the classical period. There seems to be a tacit admission, then, on the part of the modern realistic playwrights that the soliloquy, however out of place in realistic drama, has a perfectly justifiable place in idealistic drama.

<sup>1</sup> II, 10; III, 4; IV, 3.

<sup>2</sup> IV, 5; IV, 16; IV, 17; end of the play.

<sup>3</sup> III, 17.

To round out this discussion it will be necessary to consider briefly two new tendencies in modern German drama, one revitalizing the Greek drama, the other the Romantic Drama. Hugo von Hofmannsthal's "Elektra" and "Oedipus" furnish the best examples of the former movement. Of the two, "Elektra" shows the closer resemblance to Sophocles's drama of the same title upon which it is based. Strictly speaking, the presence of the chorus in Sophocles's drama makes a real soliloquy impossible, but as a matter of fact, Elektra is so overcome with grief when she delivers her outbursts of sorrow, that she is entirely oblivious of the presence of the chorus and therefore, to all intents and purposes, delivers genuine soliloquies. Later, in the third Epeisodion, when Orestes gives her an urn supposed to contain her father's ashes, Elektra again gives vent to her feelings as though no one were present. In the classic drama we accordingly have what amounts to three soliloquies. In Hofmannsthal's version we find a long morbidly passionate soliloquy, which corresponds to Elektra's first soliloquy in Sophocles's version. It is dramatic in form, practically all of it being addressed to her dead father. Compared with the original, it shows the following points of difference. The comparative calm and dignity of the original is translated into torrid passion writhing in lust for blood:

"So wie aus umgeworfnen Krügen wird's  
aus den gebundnen Mördern fliessen, rings  
wie Marmorkrüge werden nackte Leiber  
von allen ihren Helfern sein, von Männern  
und Frauen, und in einem Schwall, in einem  
geschwollnen Bach wird ihres Lebens Leben  
aus ihnen stürzen."

The description of the murder is given in greater detail and the call for revenge in the original gives way to a bloody description of the manner in which she will avenge her father. Several asides and a short soliloquy of regret occur later in the version.

In "Oedipus" there is little similarity in the two versions, as Hofmannsthal in his drama gives us only the *Vorgeschichte* of



the classical play. Numerous soliloquies occur in this drama, some with a great deal of expository material in a rather undramatic mold, others reflective and emotional, in which exclamations, apostrophes and questions are employed to good effect.

Hardt's "Tantris der Narr" and Stucken's Grail series consisting of "Gawan," "Lanval" and "Lanzelot," will illustrate the other modern movement. The splendor of medieval knight-hood and chivalry, enchanted woods and chapels, moonlit valleys and vile sorcerers are revived in these plays. Soliloquies are not numerous in these dramas. In "Lanzelot," e. g., none whatever occur, the author preferring to let his character indulge in pantomime, where the setting is most propitious for a soliloquy, as in III, 5: "After Lanzelot has gone, Elaine falls upon her knees beside the bed, shaken with sobs. Then she rises, wipes away the tears and goes to the alcove on the right, where she hastily dresses. Suddenly she stops to listen and hurries to the door in the background. Carefully she opens the door and looks out." Occasionally long epic narratives are found, as in "Gawan." Expository material is not often met with in the soliloquies, which are generally cast in very dramatic form, as, e. g., Gawan's sleep soliloquy, III, his conflict soliloquy, IV, 2, Lanval's longing for his fairy wife, IV, 1.

In the initial expository soliloquy in "Gawan," delivered by Artus, there is a beautiful descriptive passage addressed to the Virgin:

"Schön warst Du Marie, so erschrocken und kindlich hold!  
Alabaster Dein Kinn, Deine Locken gesponnenes Gold.  
Und Dein Augenpaar zwei Seen mit blauen Tiefen,  
Die selbst nie die Perlen gesehen, die drunten schliefen.  
Dein Schneeleib war durchbebt von des Wunders Schauer."

In Hardt's "Tantris," there is but one dramatic soliloquy, in his "Gudrun" four occur, three of them reflective, the other an outburst of anger and grief. Apostrophes and exclamations and occasionally the dialog form are very effectively employed in many of the soliloquies.

## CONCLUSION

Has the recent drama gained in artistic effectiveness by its disuse of the soliloquy? Is dramatic technic improved by the elimination of the convention of the soliloquy? The answer to these questions, which were touched upon in the discussion of Hauptmann, will round out this investigation.

"The history of the drama is the long record of the effort of the dramatist to get hold of the essentially dramatic and to cast out everything else."<sup>1</sup> The naturalistic dramas have cast out the soliloquy and the aside because they have felt both to be unnatural. Their attitude is that of Archer, who says: "A drama with soliloquies and asides is like a picture with inscribed labels issuing from the mouths of the figures. The glorious problem of the modern playwright is to make his characters reveal the inmost workings of their souls without saying or doing anything that they would not say or do in the real world."<sup>2</sup> A glorious problem, indeed! But unless we are endowed with a sixth sense that will enable us to become proficient mind-readers, I fear that these inmost workings of the soul will be shrouded in impenetrable darkness. But, the naturalist will retort, a pause, a look of the eye, facial expression, the actor's actions and pantomime, will convey to the audience what is going on in the mind of the character. It is undeniable, "that for the practical purposes of dramatic presentation, the symptoms of passion can be mechanically mimicked with tolerable precision."<sup>3</sup>

The simple or primary emotions, such as grief, joy, terror, "which have immediate and characteristic outward symptoms"<sup>4</sup> can undoubtedly be revealed to the audience. But what of the more complex and habitual emotions which are rather attitudes of mind and have no characteristic outward symptoms, such as love, hatred, jealousy? Neither the character's attitude nor the conflicting emotions that surge through his soul at a crisis,

<sup>1</sup> B. Matthews, *The Development of the Drama*, p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> W. Archer, *Playmaking, A Manual of Craftsmanship*, London, 1912, p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> W. Archer, *Masks or Faces*, London, 1888, p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> W. Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

to say nothing of his inner thoughts, can be revealed to the audience by means of facial expression or pantomime. "The conflicting emotions of a hero at the crisis of his fate can not possibly be made known except out of his own mouth."<sup>1</sup> "The soliloquy in which a character speaks boldly of his most secret thoughts lets a tortured hero unpack his heart; it opens a window into his soul and it gives the spectator a pleasure not to be had otherwise."<sup>2</sup> I quite agree with Robert Hessen when he says: "I have witnessed enough pantomimes in my lifetime to know that they are significant only where nothing at all is to be expressed and every laboring man would understand the crude stuff. Where something worth while is to be conveyed the understanding ceases and the libretto is pressed into service. And along this line lies the development of the drama when every soliloquy is dropped. On the stage pantomime; the audience with their noses buried in books, that is known by the name of 'modern dramas.'"<sup>2</sup> Speaking of a performance of "Francillon" he says: "The impersonator of Lucien groped about the stage for minutes in absolute silence and the audience sat there with gaping mouths without having the slightest idea of what it was all about."<sup>2</sup>

If, accordingly, a character's inmost thoughts and his inner conflicts can not be expressed even adequately by means of the substitute which the naturalists have offered, viz., pantomime, then the dramatist is handicapped by the loss of the soliloquy, and dramatic technic is made less effective. If the drama loses in artistic power by the elimination of this convention, it is high time that the dramatists of today protest against its disuse and emphasize the protest by again employing it. "Artistic and art-loving painters and sculptors would scornfully reject such a proposition as the following: 'Yes you may paint, but you must no longer use blue or yellow,' or, 'Yes, indeed, you may make statues of women, but only with a veil, like the fellah women in Egypt. The upper part of the nose and the eyes may be visible, but no more. If you are any sort of artist you will be able to make a very expressive face in spite of this re-

<sup>1</sup> B. Matthews, *A Study of the Drama*, pp. 148-149.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Robert Hessen (Avonanius), *Dramatische Handwerkslehre*, Berlin, 1902, pp. 232-233.

striction.'"<sup>1</sup> The simple fact that naturalists have lost their taste for soliloquies is no reason why every one else should dislike them. Their reiteration of the demand that everything on the stage should be a faithful copy of life is absurd, inasmuch as practically everything connected with a performance on the stage rests upon conventions. Even in a prose play based upon every-day life, there is readjustment of the plot, a compression as it were, so that it will fit into the two or three hours set aside for the performance, the elucidation of the plot so that it becomes clear to the spectator, the condensation and heightening of the dialog. Then there is the removal of the fourth wall, the raising of the actor's voices, the selection and heightening or emphasizing of gesture and facial play. "Everyone knows that the actor is not necessarily a mere copyist of nature; he must always imitate, though we may permit him to steep his imitation, so to speak, in a more or less conventional atmosphere." "He plays naturally," or, in other words, "He imitates well" is our highest formula of praise even for the operatic tenor or the French tragedian, who may not deliver a single word or tone exactly as it would be uttered in real life.<sup>2</sup>

Inasmuch as the convention of the soliloquy, then, is but one of many, the singling out of, and the 'tack upon, this one convention is uncalled for and illogical. If the characters must not do or say anything that they would not do or say in the real world, then let the gentlemen of the naturalistic school be consistent and eliminate all the other numerous conventions. No defense of the expository soliloquy is intended or implied in the preceding remarks. It is, as Mr. Archer aptly calls it, a slovenliness, and all critics are agreed that it must be shunned. But when Mr. Archer suggests that "a conversation on the telephone often provides a convenient and up-to-date substitute for a soliloquy,"<sup>3</sup> does he suppose that an up-to-date audience will fail to see through the thin disguise and not regard this makeshift with an amused smile?

It is interesting to note that Mr. Archer, after denouncing the soliloquy as a "slovenliness" and "a disturbing anachro-

<sup>1</sup> R. Hessen, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> W. Archer, *Masks or Faces*, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> W. Archer, *Playmaking*, p. 305.

nism," suffers a change of heart and champions the poor down-trodden outcast by approving of the emotional and conflict soliloquy. His attitude, especially if it reflects the point of view of the naturalists, augurs well for the future of the soliloquy and points to a new lease of life for it. In answer to his question: "Are there in modern drama any admissible soliloquies?"<sup>1</sup> he writes: "A few brief ejaculations of joy or despair, are, of course, natural enough and none will cavil with them. The approach of mental disease is often marked by a tendency to unrestrained loquacity, which goes on while the sufferer is alone, and this distressing symptom may, on rare occasion, be put to artistic use. (Gryphius was the first to advance this idea.) Short of actual derangement, however, there are certain states of nervous excitation which cause even healthy people to talk to themselves, and if an author has the skill to make us realize that his character is passing through such a crisis, he may risk a soliloquy, not only without reproach but with conspicuous psychological justification."<sup>1</sup> The last part of this statement bears out Brander Matthews's remark that "the conflicting emotions of a hero at the crisis of his fate can not be made known except out of his own mouth." The vulnerable part of his dictum lies in the fact that he attempts to convert a convention into a faithful reproduction of life. The thoughts and emotions of a character at a crisis would rarely if ever be expressed in real life other than by gestures and facial expression and possibly by brief ejaculations. If then, the character on the stage indulges in a soliloquy, it is because the author is making thought audible for our benefit by means of the convention of the soliloquy which permits inaudible thought to become audible. At any rate, Mr. Archer has seen the necessity of informing the audience of what goes on in the minds of the characters, and that is a decided step in advance of the naturalists, who have been unsuccessful in conveying such information by means of pantomime.

It is to be hoped that the dramatic authors of today and tomorrow will realize that the elimination of the soliloquy of thought and feeling is a loss to the drama and that their restoration will increase its artistic effectiveness.

<sup>1</sup> W. Archer, *Playmaking*, p. 306 ff.

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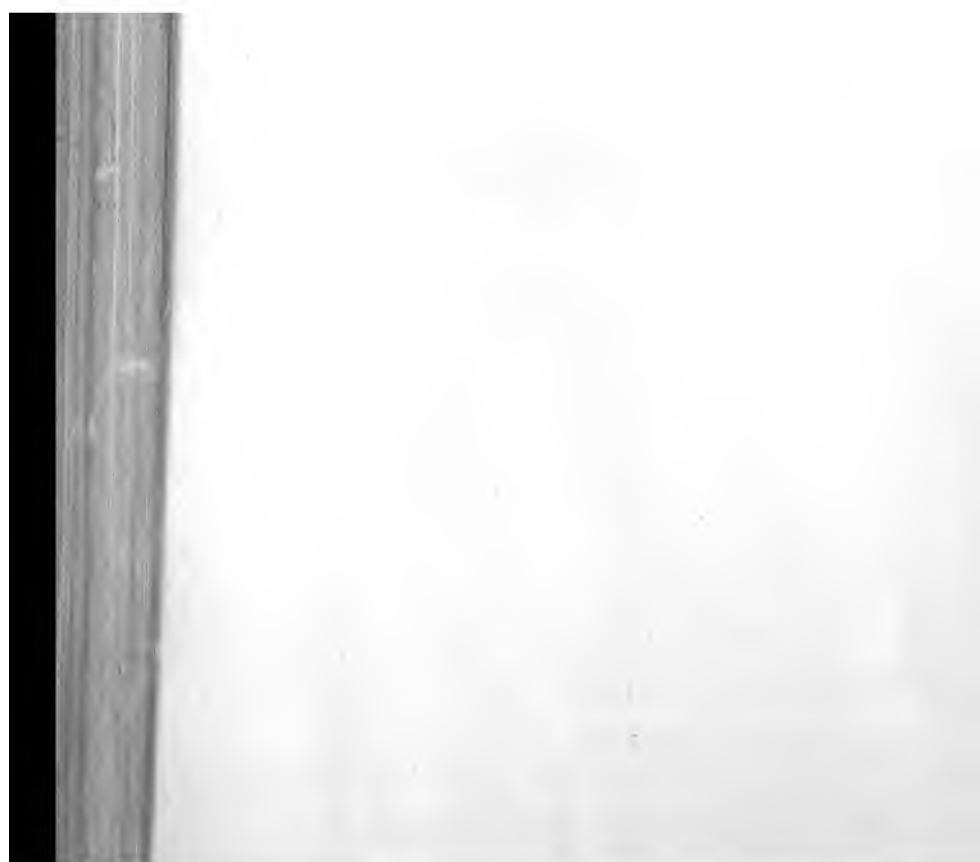
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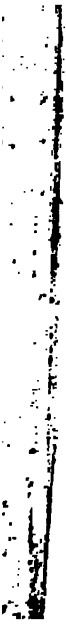
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